Two Discourses...

John Gill

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TWO DISCOURSES;

THE ONE

On PRAYER,

THE OTHER

On SINGING of PSALMS,

From 1 COR. xiv. 15.

In which are ſhewn

The Obligation to theſe DUTIES; the Nature of them; and the Manner and Uſefulneſs of performing them.

By *JOHN GILL*, D.D.

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1 Cor. xiv. 15. former Part.

What is it then? I will pray with the Spirit, and will pray with the underſtanding alſo.

THE deſign of this epiſtle is chiefly to reprove the Church at Corinth for the diviſions and contentions, which were there fomented and kept up on account of their miniſters; ſome being for Paul, ſome for Apollo, and others for Cephas, and to remove ſome irregular practices from among them, which were either openly avowed or connived at by them; ſuch as continuing a wicked perſon in their communion, going to law with one another before heathen magiſtrates, and the diſorderly attendance of many of them at the Lord's table. The apoſtle having finiſhed this part of his deſign, does, in the twelfth chapter, largely inſiſt on the ſubject of ſpiritual gifts; where he gives an account of the diverſity of them, of their author, and of their various uſefulneſs in the church of Chriſt; for which reaſon he exhorts the members of this church to covet them earneſtly, though he would not have them depend on them, ſince they are not ſaving. In the thirteenth chapter, he prefers charity or love to them, and ſhews, that without this they are uſeleſs and unprofitable to thoſe who have them, In this fourteenth chapter, he preſſes them to "follow after "charity, and deſire ſpiritual gifts, but rather, "ſays he, that ye may propheſy." He proves, by many arguments, and eſpecially by that taken from edification, that propheſying in a known language, in the mother tongue, which is underſtood by the people, is preferable to the gift of ſpeaking in an

unknown language, not underſtood by the people, and ſo unedifying to them. It is evident, that by propheſying, he means not only preaching, but praying, ſince he inſtances in it, and argues, in the words preceding my text, thus: "For if I pray in "an unknown tongue, my ſpirit prayeth, but my "underſtanding is unfruitful;" h. e. when I pray in an unknown language, being under the inſpiration of the Spirit of God, I make uſe of that extraordinary gift which he has beſtowed upon me, and my own ſpirit is indeed refreſhed by it: But what I my ſelf conceive, underſtand, and expreſs, is uſeleſs and unprofitable to others, who do not underſtand the language in which I pray; therefore, ſays he, in the words of my text, "What is "it then?" What is to be done in this caſe? What is moſt prudent and adviſeable? What is moſt eligible and deſireable? Muſt I not pray with the Spirit at all? Shall I not make uſe of that extraordinary gift which the Spirit has beſtowed upon me? Shall I entirely neglect it, and lay it aſide? No, "I will "pray with the Spirit;" I will make uſe of the gift I have; but then it ſhall be in ſuch a way and manner, as that I ſhall be underſtood by others, "I "will pray with the underſtanding alſo." In theſe words may be conſider'd,

I. The work and buſineſs of prayer, which the apoſtle reſolved in the ſtrength of Chriſt, and, by the aſſiſtance of his Spirit, to be found in the performance of; "I will pray, *&c.*"

II. The manner in which he is deſirous of performing this duty; "with the Spirit, and "with the underſtanding alſo."

I. I ſhall conſider the work and buſineſs of prayer, which the apoſtle reſolved, in the ſtrength of Chriſt, and by the aſſiſtance of his Spirit, to be found in the performance of. It will not be amiſs, under

this head, to enquire into the object of prayer, the several parts of it, and its different kinds. I shall begin,

1. With the object of prayer, which is not any mere creature. Prayer is a part of religious worship, which is due to God only. To address a creature in such a solemn manner is idolatry. This is a sin the Gentiles [a] have been notoriously guilty of, who have paid their devoirs this way, both to animate and inanimate creatures. The idolatrous heathen is thus described by the prophet [b]; "He "maketh a god his graven image; he falleth down "unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, "and saith, deliver me, for thou art my god." Such a practice as this, is an argument of great ignorance and stupidity; [c] "They have no know-"ledge, that set up the wood of their graven image, "and pray unto a god that cannot save." 'Tis no wonder that their prayers should be in vain; since [d] "their idols are silver and gold, the work of mens "hands: They have mouths, but they speak not; "eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, "but they hear not." They are insensible of the wants of their votaries, and unable to help them; they are not in a capacity to give them the least relief, or bestow the least temporal mercy on them: [e] "Are there any among the vanities of the Gen-"tiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give "showers? Art not thou he, O Lord, our God? "therefore we will wait upon thee; for thou hast "made all these things." The Papists have followed the Pagans in their idolatrous prayers [f] to angels, the virgin Mary, and other saints departed, and even to many that were not saints; but it may

[a] What the Heathens pray'd to their Gods for, and what rites and ceremonies they used in prayer, see *Alex. ab Alex.* Genial. Dierum, l. 4. c. 17. [b] Isai. xliv. 17. [c] Ib. c. xlv. 20. [d] Psal. cxv. 4, 5, 6. [e] Jer. xiv. 22. [f] Vid. Roman. Breviar.

be ſaid to them, what Eliphaz ſaid to Job[g], in another caſe; "Call now, if there be any that will "anſwer thee; and to which of the ſaints wilt thou "turn?"

God only is, and ought to be the object of prayer. "My prayer, ſays David, ſhall be unto the "God of my life[h]." God has a right to this part of worſhip from us, as he is the God of our lives, in whom we live, move, and have our being; who grants us life and favour, and whoſe viſitation preſerves our ſpirits; who daily follows us with his goodneſs, and loads us with his benefits; to whom we are obliged for every mercy, and on whom the whole ſupport and continuance of our beings depend; and we are under greater obligation ſtill, as well as have greater encouragement, to addreſs the throne of his grace, as he is the God of all grace, who has bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings, in heavenly places, in Chriſt Jeſus; all which may aſſure us, that his eyes are upon us, his ears are open to our cries, that he has both a heart and a hand to help and relieve us; he is a God that hears and anſwers prayer, to whom all fleſh ſhall come, who are ſenſible of their need of him, and dependance upon him; his arm is not ſhorten'd, that it cannot ſave, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear; nor did he ever ſay to any of the ſeed of Jacob, ſeek ye me in vain.

Though the Lord our God is but one Lord; there is but one God, which, with the ſcriptures, we aſſert, in oppoſition to the polytheiſm of the Gentiles, who had gods many, and lords many; yet there is a plurality of Perſons in the Deity[i], which are neither more nor fewer than Three, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt, which Three are One; the Father is God, the Word is God,

[g] Job v. 1. [h] Pſal. xlii. 8. [i] See my Doctrine of the Trinity ſtated and vindicated, *&c.* c. 2. p. 25, *&c.*

God, and the Holy Ghoſt is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God. Though the Perſons in the Godhead are more than One, yet the Godhead itſelf is ſingle and undivided. Now God in either and each of the three divine Perſons, may be pray'd unto. It is lawful for us to addreſs in prayer either God the Father, or God the Son, or God the Holy Ghoſt diſtinctly, though not any of them to the excluſion of the others. This I mention, to diſentangle the minds of ſome, who may have ſome ſcruples and heſitations about praying to the diſtinct Perſons in the Deity. Now it is eaſy to obſerve, that there are petitions directed to each of the three Perſons diſtinctly; of which I ſhall give ſome few inſtances from the ſcriptures.

God the Father is ſometimes ſingly and diſtinctly prayed unto, though not to the excluſion of the Son or Spirit. It would be too tedious to reckon up all the inſtances of this kind: The epiſtle to the Epheſians will furniſh us with a ſufficient number to our purpoſe. In one place, the apoſtle ſays to them; [k] "I ceaſe not to give thanks for you, "making mention of you in my prayers, that the "God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of "glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wiſdom "and revelation in the knowledge of him;" where God the Father is prayed unto, as diſtinct from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe God and Father he is, and diſtinct from the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, who as ſuch is prayed for. And in another place, he ſays, [l] "For this cauſe I bow my knees unto "the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,——that he "would grant you, according to the riches of his "glory, to be ſtrengthened with might, by his "Spirit in the inner man, that Chriſt may dwell "in your hearts by faith;" in which paſſage God the Father is addreſſed, as the object of prayer, diſtinct

[k] Eph. i. 16, 17. [l] Ib. ch. iii. 14, 16, 17.

diſtinct from Chriſt and the Spirit; the former of which he deſires might dwell in their hearts by faith, and that they might be ſtrengthen'd by the latter in their inner man. If theſe inſtances were not ſufficient, others might be produced; but about God the Father's being the object of prayer, there is no queſtion nor heſitation.

God the Son, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, may be diſtinctly prayed unto, of which are many inſtances in ſcripture. Sometimes he is prayed unto in conjunction with his Father, as appears from all thoſe paſſages in the epiſtles[m], where "grace and peace "are deſired from God our Father, and the Lord "Jeſus Chriſt;" and from many others ſuch as theſe: [n] "Now God himſelf, and our Father, and "our Lord Jeſus, direct our way unto you; and "the Lord, *h. e.* the Lord Jeſus, make you to in-"creaſe and abound in love one towards another, "and towards all men, even as we do towards you;" and, in another place, [o] "Now our Lord Jeſus "Chriſt himſelf, and God, even our Father, which "hath loved us, and hath given us everlaſting con-"ſolation and good hope, through grace, comfort "your hearts, and ſtabliſh you in every good word "and work." Sometimes Chriſt is prayed unto ſingly and alone; as by Stephen at the time of his death, when he prayed, ſaying, [p] "Lord Jeſus re-"ceive my ſpirit:" By the apoſtle Paul [q], when he had "a thorn in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan "to buffet him; for this, ſays he, I beſought the "Lord thrice, *h. e.* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as ap-"pears from the context, that it might depart from "me: And he ſaid unto me, my grace is ſufficient "for thee; for my ſtrength is made perfect in "weak-

[m] Rom. i. 7. 1 Cor. i. 3. 2 Cor. i. 2. Gal. i. 3. Eph. i. 2. Phil. i. 2. Col. i. 2. 1 Theſſ. i. 1. 2 Theſſ. i. 2. 1 Tim. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 2. Tit. i. 4. Philem. ver. 3. 2 John ver. 3. Rev. i. 4, 5. [n] 1 Theſſ. iii. 11, 12. [o] 2 Theſſ. ii. 16, 17. [p] Acts vii. 59. [q] 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

" weakneſs. Moſt gladly therefore will I rather " glory in my infirmities, that the power of Chriſt " may reſt upon me." By the apoſtle John, when Chriſt ſaid to him, [r] " Surely I come quickly, he " replies, Amen, even ſo, come, Lord Jeſus." And by many others; ſuch as thoſe mentioned by Ananias to Chriſt, when he bid him ariſe, and go to Saul; [s] " Lord, ſays he, I have heard by many of " this man, how much evil he hath done to thy " ſaints at Jeruſalem; and here he hath authority " from the chief prieſts to bind all that call on thy " name."

God the Holy Ghoſt may be alſo prayed unto, as he is ſometimes ſingly and alone, and as diſtinct from the Father and the Son; [t] " The Lord di- " rect your hearts into the love of God, and into " the patient waiting for Chriſt." By the Lord, I underſtand the Lord the Spirit, whoſe work it is, to direct the hearts of believers into the love of God, and to ſhed it abroad in their hearts; who is manifeſtly diſtinguiſhed in this petition from God the Father, into whoſe love, and from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, into a patient waiting for of whom, the hearts of the ſaints are deſired to be directed by him. Sometimes he is prayed unto diſtinctly, in conjunction with the other two Perſons, as by the apoſtle Paul; [u] " The grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and " the love of God, and the communion of the Holy " Ghoſt, be with you all. Amen." And by the apoſtle John; [w] " Grace be unto you, and peace, " from him which is, and which was, and which " is to come; and from the ſeven ſpirits which are " before his throne, and from Jeſus Chriſt, who is " the faithful witneſs." By the ſeven ſpirits, cannot be meant angels; for it cannot be thought that they, being creatures, ſhould be put upon a level with

[r] Rev. xxii. 20. [s] Acts ix. 14. [t] 2 Theſſ. iii. 5.
[u] 2 Cor. xiii. 14. [w] Rev. i. 4, 5.

with the divine Being, and be with him addreſſed in ſuch a ſolemn manner; but by them we are to underſtand the Holy Spirit of God, who is ſo called either in alluſion to *Iſai.* xi. 2. or on account of the ſeven churches of Aſia, to whom John wrote by his dictates, or to denote the perfection and fulneſs of his gifts and graces.

Now though each divine Perſon may be ſingly and diſtinctly addreſſed in prayer, and all Three together being the one God, be conſider'd as the object of it; yet, according to the order of the Perſons in the Deity, and ſuitably to their ſeveral and diſtinct parts, which they, by agreement, take in the affair of man's ſalvation, God the Father, the firſt Perſon, is generally addreſſed as the object of prayer, though not to the excluſion of the Son and Spirit: Chriſt is the Mediator, by whom we draw nigh to God; and the Holy Ghoſt is the enditer of our prayers, and who aſſiſts in the putting of them up unto him.

The firſt Perſon is uſually addreſſed in prayer under the character of a Father, and as our Father; ſo Chriſt taught his diſciples to pray, [x] "Our Father which art in heaven, *&c.*" and he is to be conſidered in this relation to us, either as the Father of our ſpirits, the Author of our beings, by whom we are provided for, ſupplied, and ſupported in them. In this manner the church in Iſaiah's time applied to him, ſaying; [y] "But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we are all the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very ſore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, ſee, we beſeech thee, we are all thy people." Or he may be conſidered as the Father or Author of our mercies, temporal and ſpiritual, which he, in a kind and gracious manner, beſtows on us, through Chriſt, and

[x] Matt. vi. 9. [y] Iſai. lxiv. 8, 9.

and that as the Father of Chriſt, and as our God and Father in Chriſt. In this view the apoſtle addreſſes him, when he ſays, [z] "Bleſſed be God, "even the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the "Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." And, in another place [a], "Bleſſed be the God and "Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed "us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in "Chriſt." Now theſe ſeveral conſiderations furniſh out ſo many reaſons and arguments to induce and encourage us to apply to him, who is "the "God of all grace," and is both able and willing to "ſupply our need according to his riches in glory "by Chriſt Jeſus."

The ſecond Perſon, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is both God and man, is the Mediator between God and man. God, abſolutely conſidered, is a "conſuming fire;" there is no approaching to him as creatures, and eſpecially as ſinful creatures. Job was ſenſible of this, when he ſaid, [b] "He is not a "man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we "ſhould come together in judgment; neither is "there any days-man betwixt us, that might lay "his hand upon us both." Now Chriſt is the Days-man, the Mediator, the middle Perſon, who has opened a way for us to God, even "a new and living "way, which he hath conſecrated for us, through "the vail, that is to ſay, his fleſh [c]." He himſelf is "the way, the truth, and the life;" he is the way of acceſs to God; "through him we, both Jews "and Gentiles, have an acceſs, by one Spirit, unto "the Father;" he is the way of acceptance with God; our perſons are "accepted in the beloved," and our "ſpiritual ſacrifices" of prayer and praiſe are "acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt:" The prayers of the ſaints are called "odours [d]; they are of

[z] 2 Cor. i. 3. [a] Eph. i. 3. [b] Job ix. 32, 33. [c] Heb. x. 20. John xiv. 6. Eph. ii. 18. and i. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 5. [d] Rev. v. 8. and viii. 3, 4.

of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour to God; which is owing to the mediation of Chriſt, the Angel of God's preſence, who ſtands continually at the golden altar before the throne, with a golden cenſer in his hand, to whom is given much incenſe, with which he offers the prayers of all ſaints, and which makes them a ſweet odour to God. Our encouragements to prayer, and to the exerciſe of grace in that duty, are chiefly taken from, and our pleas for the bleſſings of grace, are founded on the Perſon, blood, righteouſneſs, ſacrifice, and interceſſion of Chriſt. "Seeing then, ſays the apoſtle [e], that we have a "great High Prieſt, that is paſſed into the hea- "vens, Jeſus the Son of God, let us hold faſt our "profeſſion: For we have not an High Prieſt "which cannot be touched with the feeling of our "infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as "we are, yet without ſin. Let us therefore come "boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain "mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." And, in another place [f], he exhorts and encourages to this work in much the ſame manner; "Having, "ſays he, an High Prieſt over the houſe of God, "let us draw near with a true heart, in full aſſu- "rance of faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from "an evil conſcience, and our bodies waſhed with "pure water."

The third Perſon, the Holy Spirit, takes his part, and has a peculiar place in this work; he is the Author of prayer, the Enditer of it, who forms it in our hearts, creates breathings, and deſires after ſpiritual things, ſtirs us up to prayer, and aſſiſts in it. Hence he is called, [g] "The Spirit of grace and of "ſupplications;" both the gift and grace of prayer come from him; he informs us of our wants, acquaints us with our neceſſities, teaches us, both in what manner, and for what we ſhould pray; for what

[e] Heb. iv. 14,15,16. [f] Ib. ch. x. 21,22. [g] Zech. xii. 10.

what his most suitable for us, and agreeable to the will of God to bestow on us, and helps us under all our infirmities in prayer; which is observed by the apostle, for the use, instruction, and comfort of believers, when he says[h], "Likewise the Spirit also "helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what "we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit "itself maketh intercession for us with groanings "which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth "the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the "Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the "saints, according to the will of God." As Christ is our Advocate with the Father, pleads our cause, and makes intercession at the right hand of God for the acceptation of our persons and prayers, so the Holy Spirit is our Advocate within us; he makes intercession for us in our own hearts; he puts strength into us; he fills our mouths with arguments, and enables us to plead with God. Christ is the Mediator, through whom, and the Spirit, the Assister, by whom we have access to the Father. God, as the God of all grace, kindly invites us to himself; Christ, the Mediator, gives us boldness; and the Spirit of grace, freedom and liberty in our access unto him; and this is what the scriptures call[i] "praying "with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and "praying in the Holy Ghost." But of this more hereafter. I proceed,

2. To consider the several parts of prayer; in which I do not design to prescribe any precise form of praying, but to observe to you the method and matter of it, which may serve to direct and assist you in it. It is proper to begin this work with a celebration and adoration of some one or more of the divine perfections; which will at once have a tendency to strike our minds with a proper sense of the divine Majesty, glorify him, and encourage us in

[h] Rom. viii. 26, 27. [i] Eph. vi. 18. Jude, *ver.* 20.

our supplications to him; all which is highly necessary in our entrance on it. All the perfections of God are instructive to us in this work, and serve to influence our minds and affections towards him, command our fear and reverence of him, engage our faith in him, strengthen our dependance on him, and raise in us expectations of receiving good things from him. The greatness, glory, power, and majesty of God, the holiness, purity, and righteousness of his nature, oblige us to an humble submission to him, and reverential awe of him. The consideration of his love, grace, mercy, and goodness, will not suffer his dread to make us afraid. We learn from his omniscience, that he knows not only our persons, but our wants, and what is most suitable for us, when the most convenient season, and which the best way and manner to bestow it on us. It can be no small satisfaction to us, "that all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom "we have to do;" the thoughts of our hearts are not hid from him; the secret ejaculations of our minds are known to him; the breathings and desires of our souls are before him; he understands the language of a sigh and groan; and when we chatter like a crane or a swallow, it does not pass unobserved by him. His omnipotence assures us that nothing is too hard for him, or impossible to him; that he is "able to do exceeding abundantly above "all that we ask or think;" that we can't be in such a low estate, or distressed condition, or attended with such streights and difficulties; but he is able to relieve, deliver, and save us. We conclude from his omnipresence, that he fills the heavens and the earth; that he is in all places, at all times; that he is a God at hand, and a God afar off; that he is near unto us, where-ever we are, ready to assist us, and will be "a very present help in trouble." His immutability in his counsel, and faithfulness in his covenant,

yield

yield the "heirs of promiſe ſtrong conſolation." Theſe give us reaſon to believe that not one of the good things which the Lord has promiſed ſhall ever fail; that what he has ſaid, he will do; and what he has either purpoſed or promiſed, he will bring to paſs: "He will not ſuffer his faithfulneſs to fail; "his covenant he will not break, nor alter the thing "that is gone out of his lips." You ſee that the notice of theſe things is neceſſary, both for the glory of God and our own comfort. It is alſo very proper, when we begin our addreſs to God, to make mention of ſome one or more of his names and titles, as Jehovah, Lord, God, *&c.* and of the relations he ſtands in to us; not only as the God of nature, the Author of our beings, the Donor of our mercies, and the Preſerver of our lives, but as the God of grace, the Father of Chriſt, and our Covenant-God, and Father in Chriſt. After this manner our Lord directed his diſciples to pray, ſaying, "Our "Father which art in heaven, *&c.*"

In the next place, it highly becomes us to acknowledge our meanneſs and unworthineſs, to make confeſſion of our ſins and tranſgreſſions, and pray for the freſh diſcoveries and manifeſtations of pardoning love and grace. When we enter into the divine preſence, and take upon us to ſpeak unto the Lord, we ſhould own with Abraham [k], that we are "but duſt and aſhes;" and with Jacob [l], that we are "not worthy of the leaſt of all the mercies, and "of all the truth which God has ſhewed unto us." Confeſſion of ſin, both of our nature and of our lives, is a very proper and neceſſary part of this work. This has been the practice of the ſaints in all ages; as of *David*, which appears from his own words [m]; "I acknowledge my ſin unto thee, and "mine iniquity have I not hid: I ſaid, I will con-"feſs my tranſgreſſions unto the Lord, and thou

"for-

[k] Gen. xviii. 27. [l] Chap. xxxii. 10. [m] Pſal xxxii. 5.

" forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin." So Daniel, when he ſet his face unto the Lord God, to ſeek by prayer and ſupplications, made confeſſion both of his own and of the ſins of others; " I prayed unto " the Lord my God, ſays he [n], and made my con- " feſſion, and ſaid, O Lord, the great and dread- " ful God, keeping the covenant, and mercy to " them that love him, and to them that keep his " commandments. We have ſinned and commit- " ted iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have " rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts, " and from thy judgments; neither have we hear- " ken'd unto thy ſervants the prophet, which ſpake " in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our " fathers, and to all the people of the land." And the apoſtle John, for the encouragement of be- lievers in this part of the duty of prayer, ſays [o] " If " we confeſs our ſins, he, *h. e.* God, is juſt and " faithful to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us " from all unrighteouſneſs:" Not that confeſſion of ſin is either the procuring cauſe, or means, or condition of pardon, and cleanſing, which are both owing to the blood of Chriſt; in juſtice and faith- fulneſs to which, and him that ſhed it, God forgives the ſins of his people, and cleanſes them from them; but the deſign of the apoſtle is to ſhew that ſin is in the ſaints, and is committed by them, and that con- feſſion of ſin is right and acceptable in the ſight of God; and, to animate and encourage them to it, he takes notice of the juſtice and faithfulneſs of God in pardoning and cleanſing his people, through the blood of Chriſt, which, as he had a little before ob- ſerved, " cleanſeth from all ſin." Nay, we are not only to make confeſſion of ſin in prayer, but to pray for the pardon and forgiveneſs of it. Chriſt directed his diſciples to this part of their duty, when he bid them pray after this manner [p]; " Forgive us our " debts,

[n] Dan. ix. 4, 5, 6. [o] 1 John i. 9. [p] Matt. vi. 12.

"debts, as we forgive our debtors." This has been the constant practice of the saints, as of Moses [q]; "O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go amongst "us, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and "take us for thine inheritance." Of David [r]; "For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine ini-"quity, for it is great." Yea, he says [s] to the Lord, "For this, shall every one that is godly pray unto "thee, in a time when thou mayest be found." And of Daniel [t], "O Lord, hear; O Lord, for-"give; O Lord, hearken and do, defer not, for "thine own sake, O my God; for thy city and thy "people are called by thy name." Now it ought to be observed, that very frequently when the saints pray, either for the forgiveness of their own, or others sins, their meaning is, that God would, in a providential way, deliver them out of present distress, remove his afflicting hand, which lies heavy on them, or avert such judgments which seem to hang over their heads, and very much threaten them; which, when he does, is an indication of his having pardoned them. We are to understand many petitions of Moses [u], Job [w], Solomon [x], and others, in this sense: Besides, when believers now pray for the pardon of sin, their meaning is not that the blood of Christ should be shed again for the remission of their sins; or that any new act of pardon should arise in God's mind, and be passed by him; but that they might have the sense, the manifestation, and application of pardoning grace to their souls. We are not to imagine, that as often as the saints sin, repent, confess their sins, and pray for the forgiveness of them, that God makes and passes new acts of pardon; for he has, by one eternal and compleat act of grace, in the view of his Son's blood and sacrifice, freely and fully forgiven all the trespasses of

[q] Exod. xxxiv. 9. [r] Psal. xxv. 11. [s] Psal. xxxii. 6.
[t] Dan. ix. 19. [u] Exod. xxxii. 32. Numb. xiv. 19, 20.
[w] Job vii. 21, [x] 1 Kings viii. 30, 34, 36, 39, 50.

of his choſen ones, all their ſins paſt, preſent, and to come; but whereas they daily ſin againſt God, grieve his Spirit, and wound their own conſciences, they have need of the freſh ſprinklings of the blood of Jeſus, and of renewed manifeſtations of pardon to their ſouls; and it is both their duty and intereſt to attend the throne of grace on this account.

Another part and branch of prayer lies in putting up petitions to God for good things, temporal and ſpiritual mercies, the bleſſings of nature and of grace. As we ought to live in a dependance on divine providence, ſo we ſhould daily pray for the common ſuſtenance of our bodies, the comfort, ſupport, and preſervation of our lives; as our Lord has taught us, ſaying[y], "Give us this day our daily bread." Our requeſts in this way ought, indeed, to be frequent, but not large; we ſhould not ſeek great things for ourſelves. Agur's prayer[z] is a proper copy for us to follow; "Two things, ſays he to "the Lord, have I required of thee, deny me "them not before I die; remove far from me "vanity and lies: Give me neither poverty nor "riches; feed me with food convenient for me, "leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay, who is the "Lord? or leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the "name of my God in vain." The ſpiritual bleſſings we ſhould aſk for, are ſuch as God has laid up in the covenant of grace, which is ordered in all things, and ſure, Chriſt has procured by his blood, the goſpel is a revelation of, and the Spirit of God makes interceſſion for in our own hearts, according to the will of God; for theſe things we ſhould "pray "in faith, nothing wavering[a]; for this is the con- "fidence that we have in him, *h. e.* God, that if "we aſk any thing according to his will, he heareth "us; and if we know that he hear us, whatſoever "we

[y] Matth. vi. 11. [z] Prov. xxx. 7, 8, 9. [a] James i. 6. 1 John v. 14, 15.

" we aſk, we know that we have the petitions that " we deſired of him." When we pray for ſpecial mercies, ſpiritual bleſſings, ſuch as converting grace for unconverted friends and relations, we ought to pray in ſubmiſſion to the ſecret will of God.

Thankſgiving for mercies received, is another thing which we ſhould not be forgetful of at the throne of grace; " In every thing, by prayer and " ſupplication, with thankſgiving, ſays the apoſtle[b], " let your requeſts be made known to God." As we have always mercies to pray for, ſo likewiſe to return thanks for; it becomes us to " continue in " prayer[c]," for conſtant ſupplies from heaven, and to " watch in the ſame with thankſgiving," *h. e.* to wait for the bleſſings we have been praying for; and when we have received them, to watch for a proper opportunity, and make uſe of it, to " offer " the ſacrifice of praiſe to God, that is, the fruit of " our lips, giving thanks to his name." When this part is neglected, it is highly reſented by the Lord; as appears from the caſe of the ten lepers[d], when " one of them ſaw that he was healed, turned back, " and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell " down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: " And he was a Samaritan; upon which our Lord " ſays, Were there not ten cleanſed? but where are " the nine? there are not found that returned to " give glory to God, ſave this ſtranger."

Before we conclude the exerciſe of this duty, it is proper to deprecate ſuch evils from us, which are either upon us, or we know we are liable to, or may befal us; ſuch as the temptations of Satan, the ſnares of the world, the diſtreſſes of life, public calamities, *&c.* This was in part practiſed by Daniel: " O " Lord, ſays he[e], according to all thy righteouſ- " neſs,

[b] Phil. iv. 6. [c] Col. iv. 2. [d] Luke xvii. 15, 16, 17, 18. [e] Dan. ix. 16.

" neſs, I beſeech thee, let thine anger and thy fury " be turned away from thy city Jeruſalem, thy holy " mountain; becauſe for our ſins, and for the ini- " quities of our fathers, Jeruſalem and thy people " are become a reproach to all that are about us." And this is intimated by Chriſt to his diſciples, in that excellent directory of prayer he gave them, part of which was this; [f] " Lead us not into tempta- " tion, but deliver us from evil."

At the cloſe of this work of prayer, it is neceſſary to make uſe of doxologies, or aſcriptions of glory to God; as we begin with God, we ſhould end with him; as in the entrance on this duty, we aſcribe greatneſs to him, ſo at the concluſion of it we ſhould aſcribe glory to him. Such an aſcription of glory to God, we find, was uſed by Chriſt at the end of the prayer he taught his diſciples, in this manner; [g] " Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the " glory." By the apoſtle Paul [h] in this form; " Unto him, *h. e.* God, be glory in the church, by " Chriſt Jeſus, throughout all ages, world without " end." And in another place thus [i]; " Now unto " the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only " wiſe God, be honour and glory, for ever and " ever." By the apoſtle Jude in theſe words [k]; " Now unto him that is able to keep you from " falling, and to preſent you faultleſs before the " preſence of his glory, with exceeding joy; to the " only wiſe God our Saviour, be glory and majeſty, " dominion and power, both now and ever." And by the apoſtle John after this manner [l]; " Unto " him that hath loved us, and waſhed us from our " ſins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and " prieſts unto God and his Father; to him be glory " and dominion for ever and ever." Theſe, and ſuch like aſcriptions of glory to God, Father, Son, and

[f] Matt. vi. 13. [g] Ibid. [h] Eph. iii. 21. [i] 1 Tim. i. 17. [k] Jude, ver. 24, 25. [l] Rev. i. 5, 6.

and Spirit, are neceſſary at the finiſhing of our ſupplications, ſince the mercies and bleſſings we have been either petitioning, or returning thanks for, come from him; beſides, they ſerve to ſhew forth the praiſes of God, and to expreſs our ſenſe of gratitude to him, our dependance upon him, and our expectation of receiving good things from him.

The whole of this exerciſe of prayer ſhould be concluded with pronouncing the word Amen; as a teſtification of our hearty aſſent to what we have expreſſed, and of our ſincere deſires and wiſhes, that what we have been praying for might be accompliſhed, and of our full and firm perſuaſion and aſſured belief that God is able, willing, and faithful to perform all that he has promiſed, and give whatſoever we have been aſking of him, according to his will. But I proceed,

3. To conſider the ſeveral ſorts and kinds of prayer, or the various diſtributions into which it may be made, or the different views in which it may be conſidered.

Prayer may be conſidered either as mental or vocal. Mental prayer is what is only conceived in the mind; it conſiſts of ſecret ejaculations in the heart, which are not expreſſed with an audible and articulate voice. Such was the prayer of Hannah, of whom it is ſaid[m]; that "as ſhe continued praying "before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth. "Now Hannah ſhe ſpake in her heart, only her "lips moved; but her voice was not heard, there"fore Eli thought ſhe had been drunken." Vocal prayer is that which, being conceived and formed in the heart, is expreſſed by the tongue, in words, with an audible and articulate voice, ſo as to be heard and underſtood. This the prophet intends, when he ſays[n]; "Take with you words, and turn "unto the Lord, ſay unto him, Take away all ini-

[m] 1 Sam. i. 12, 13. [n] Hoſ. xiv. 2.

" quity, and receive us graciouſly; ſo will we ren-
" der the calves of our lips."

Again, prayer may be conſidered either as private or public. Private prayer is that which is either performed in the family, by the head or maſter of it, the reſt joining with him in it, or by a ſociety of Chriſtians in a private houſe, or by a ſingle perſon, in ſecret and alone; concerning which Chriſt gives theſe directions and inſtructions[o]: " When
" thou prayeſt, ſays he, thou ſhalt not be as the
" hypocrites are; for they love to pray ſtanding in
" the ſynagogues, and in the corners of the ſtreets,
" that they may be ſeen of men; verily, I ſay unto
" you, they have their reward. But thou, when
" thou prayeſt, enter into thy cloſet; and when
" thou haſt ſhut thy door, pray to thy Father,
" which is in ſecret, and thy Father, which ſeeth
" in ſecret, ſhall reward thee openly." Public prayer is what is uſed in the houſe of God, which is therefore called[p], an " houſe of prayer;" where the people of God meet together, and, with the other parts of divine, public, and ſocial worſhip, perform this. The firſt Chriſtians, in the early days of the goſpel, are commended, among other things, for their " continuing ſtedfaſtly in prayers," *h. e.* in public prayers[q]; they conſtantly met where " prayer was
" wont to be made;" and God was pleaſed to give a ſignal teſtimony of his approbation of this their practice; for, at a certain time, [r] " when they had
" prayed, the place was ſhaken, where they were
" aſſembled together; and they were all filled with
" the Holy Ghoſt, and they ſpake the word of God
" with boldneſs."

Once more: Prayer may be conſidered either as extraordinary or ordinary. Extraordinary prayer is that which is made uſe of on particular and ſpecial occa-

[o] Matt. vi. 5, 6. [p] Iſai. lvi. 7. [q] Acts ii. 42.
[r] Ib. ch. iv. 31.

occaſions; as that exerciſe of prayer, which was kept by the church on account of Peter's being in priſon. The divine hiſtorian ſays[s], that "Peter "was kept in priſon; but prayer was made with-"out ceaſing of the church unto God for him;" which inſtance of extraordinary prayer was followed with an extraordinary event; for whilſt they were praying, an angel was diſpatched from heaven, and looſed Peter from his bonds, who came to the place where the church was aſſembled, before they had broke up their exerciſe. Such alſo were the prayers of the elders of the church in thoſe times for the ſick, which the apoſtle James ſpeaks of[t]; "Is any ſick among you? let him call for the "elders of the church, and let them pray over him, "anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; "and the prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſick, and "the Lord ſhall raiſe him up." Ordinary prayer is what is uſed in common in the church of God, in a religious family, or by a ſingle perſon, at ſtated times; which, with David and Daniel under the Old Teſtament, were three times a day[u], evening, morning, and at noon; which practice is laudable enough to follow, provided no ſtreſs is laid on the punctual performance of this duty at theſe preciſe times, and is not made the term and condition of our acceptance with God, and of our ſtanding in his favour, which would be to reduce us to the covenant of works, enſnare our ſouls, and bring us into a ſtate of bondage.

II. I come now to conſider the manner in which the apoſtle was deſirous of performing this duty.

1. "With the Spirit." By the Spirit[w], ſome underſtand no more than the human breath, or voice; and ſuppoſe that the apoſtle's meaning is, that

[s] Acts xii. 5. [t] James v. 14, 15. [u] Pſal. lv. 17. Dan. vi. 10. [w] Primaſius, Gaignaeus & Eraſmus in *Eſtius*, in v. 14. Vid. Bezam & Paraeum in ib.

that he would pray vocally, with an articulate voice, with diſtinct ſounds, ſo as to be underſtood: Perhaps ſome paſſages in this chapter, which may ſeem to favour this ſenſe, might incline them to it; as when the apoſtle obſerves[x], that "things without "life giving ſound, whether pipe or harp, except "they give a diſtinction in the ſounds, how ſhall "it be known what is piped or harped? For if the "trumpet give an uncertain ſound, who ſhall pre-"pare himſelf to the battle? So likewiſe you, ex-"cept ye utter by the tongue words eaſy to be un-"derſtood, how ſhall it be known what is ſpoken? "for ye ſhall ſpeak into the air. There are, it may "be, ſo many kinds of voices in the world, and "none of them are without ſignification; therefore "if I know not the meaning of the voice, I ſhall be "unto him that ſpeaketh a Barbarian; and he that "ſpeaketh, a Barbarian unto me." But the apoſtle here, by voice and diſtinction in ſounds, does not intend a clear, diſtinct, articulate voice, but the mother-tongue, a known language, in oppoſition to an unknown tongue and foreign language, not underſtood by the people. This ſenſe of the words is mean, low, and trifling, as well as forced and ſtrained.

By "the Spirit," rather is meant the extraordinary gift of the Spirit beſtowed on the apoſtle and others, by which they ſpoke with divers tongues, and which he determined to make uſe of, though in ſuch a manner, as to be underſtood: He would not uſe it without an interpretation. This is the ſenſe I have given of it already, and is the moſt generally received ſenſe of interpreters, and which may be confirmed by the uſe of the word in the context, as in *ver.* 2. "He that ſpeaketh in an unknown "tongue, ſpeaketh not unto men, but unto God, "for no man underſtandeth him; howbeit, in the "Spirit,"

[x] Verſes 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

" Spirit," *h. e.* by exercising the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, " he speaketh mysteries;" and in *ver.* 14. " If I pray in an unknown tongue, my " Spirit prayeth," *h. e.* I pray by virtue of the extraordinary gift of the Spirit bestowed on me; but " my understanding is unfruitful;" I am of no use and service to those that hear me. So likewise in *ver.* 16. " Else when thou shalt bless with the Spirit," *h. e.* when thou givest thanks in an unknown tongue, through the gift of the Spirit, " how shall he that " occupieth the room of the unlearned, say, Amen, " at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth " not what thou sayest?"

There is another sense of the phrase, which I am unwilling to omit, and that is this: By " praying " with the Spirit," some understand the apostle's own spirit, or his praying in a spiritual way, with a spirit of devotion and fervency; and, indeed, in such a manner he performed every part of religious worship and service, whether preaching or praying, or any thing else: " God is my witness, says he [y], " whom I serve with my spirit, in the gospel of his " Son;" which kind of service is most agreeable to the nature of God [z]: He is " a Spirit, and they that " worship him, must worship him in Spirit, and in " truth." And it becomes us to be fervent in spirit, whilst we are serving the Lord. Such a frame of soul, particularly in prayer, is most suitable to the work, most desirable to the saints, acceptable to God, and powerful with him; [a] " The effectual fervent " prayer of the righteous man availeth much."

We may be said to pray with our spirits, or in a spiritual way, when we draw nigh to God with a true heart; or when we are enabled to lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens; people may draw near to him, as the Jews of old did [b], with their mouth, and with their lips, honour him,

[y] Rom. i. 9. [z] John iv. 24. [a] James v. 16. [b] Isa. xxix. 13.

him, and yet, at the ſame time, their heart may be removed far from him, and their fear towards him, be taught by the precept of men. It is one thing to have the gift of prayer, and another to have the grace of prayer, and that in exerciſe; it is one thing to pray with the mouth, and another to pray with the heart. Praying in a formal, graceleſs manner, is mere outſide worſhip, lip-labour, bodily exerciſe, that profiteth nothing; it is uſeleſs to men, and unacceptable to God, who accounts of it, and calls it no other than howling. Hence he ſays of ſome[c], "They have not cried unto me with their hearts, "when they howled upon their beds." Spiritual fervent prayer is, more or leſs, performed in the exerciſe of the grace of faith; ſuch who draw nigh to God with a true heart, ſhould alſo in full aſſurance of faith. The apoſtle James directs to prayer in this way[d]; "If any of you, ſays he, lack wiſdom, let "him aſk of God, that giveth to all men liberally, "and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him: "But let him aſk in faith, nothing wavering; for "he that wavereth is like a wave of the ſea, driven "with the wind, and toſſed; for let not that man "think, that he ſhall receive any thing of the Lord." We ſhould not only have an aſſurance of faith, with reſpect to the object whom we addreſs, which is abſolutely neceſſary; [e] "For he that cometh to God, "muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder "of them that diligently ſeek him;" but alſo with reſpect to the things we pray for, when they are ſuch which God has promiſed, which he has laid up in his covenant, put into the hands of his Son, and, we know, are according to his revealed mind and will to give; all which is conſiſtent with that reverence and godly fear, by which we ſerve God acceptably; with that humility which becomes ſupplicants, and is grateful to God, who "reſiſteth the "proud,

[c] Hoſ. vii. 14. [d] James i. 5, 6, 7. [e] Heb. xi. 6.

" proud, but giveth grace to the humble;" and with that ſubmiſſion and reſignation of our wills to his will, in which Chriſt is a glorious pattern to us, when he in prayer ſaid[f], " Father, if thou be willing, re-" move this cup from me; nevertheleſs, not my " will, but thine be done." In a word, when we pray with our ſpirits, or in a ſpiritual way, we not only lift up our hearts to God, and what we aſk for, aſk in faith, with a reverential filial fear of the divine Majeſty, in deep humility of ſoul, and with an entire ſubmiſſion to God's will; but alſo in the name and for the ſake of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; we do not preſent our ſupplications to God for our righteouſneſſes, but for the Lord's ſake, and for his great mercies; we come not in our own name, but in Chriſt's; we go forth not in our own ſtrength, but in his; we make mention of his righteouſneſs, and of his only; we plead the merits and efficacy of his blood; we bring his ſacrifice in the arms of our faith; we expect audience and acceptance upon his account alone, and that our petitions and requeſts will be heard and anſwer'd for his ſake; and we leave them with him, who is our Advocate with the Father. This may be called true, ſpiritual, fervent, and effectual prayer.

Prayer cannot be performed in ſuch a manner, without the grace, influence, and aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God. Some therefore think, that by " the " Spirit," in my text, is meant the Holy Spirit of God; and that praying with the Spirit, is the ſame which the apoſtle Jude calls " praying in the Holy " Ghoſt." If we take the words in this ſenſe, we are not to ſuppoſe that when the apoſtle ſays, " I " will pray with the Spirit," that he imagined he could pray with the Holy Spirit, and under his influences when he pleaſed; his words muſt be conſidered

[f] Luke xxii. 42.

ſidered only as expreſſive of the ſenſe he had of the need of the Spirit of God in prayer, and of his earneſt deſires, after his gracious aſſiſtance in the performance of it. I have already obſerved what place the Holy Ghoſt has in the work of prayer; he is the Author of it; he is the Spirit of grace and ſupplications; the Enditer of it, he forms it in the heart; [g] the effectual fervent, ἐνεργεμένη, the inſpired, the inwrought prayer of a righteous man availeth much; that is, ſuch prayer as is formed in the ſoul by the powerful energy of the Spirit of God, who puts things into the heart, and words into the mouth: [h] "Take with you words, and turn to the "Lord; ſay unto him, Take away all iniquity, and "receive us graciouſly:" He directs in the matter of prayer; [i] "for we know not what we ſhould pray "for as we ought; he maketh interceſſion for the "ſaints, according to the will of God." And, indeed, who ſo proper as he, who ſearches the deep things of God, and perfectly knows his mind? he helps the ſaints under all their infirmities: When they are ſhut up in their ſouls, and cannot come forth in prayer with liberty, he enlarges their hearts, and gives them freedom of ſoul, and liberty of ſpeech, ſo as they can pour out their ſouls before God, and tell him all their mind: [k] "Where the Spirit of the "Lord is, there is liberty." Without him we cannot pray, either in faith or with fervency; nor can we call God our Father without him, the Spirit of adoption, or uſe that freedom with him, as children with a Father; but "becauſe ye are ſons, ſays "the apoſtle [l], God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his "Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

Perhaps it may be objected, that if the Spirit of God is ſo abſolutely neceſſary in prayer, then men ought not to pray, unleſs they have the Spirit, or are under

[g] James v. 16. [h] Hoſ. xiv. 2. [i] Rom. viii. 26, 27.
[k] 2 Cor. iii. 17. [l] Gal. iv. 6.

under the immediate influences of his grace. To which I anſwer, that prayer may be conſider'd as a natural duty; and as ſuch is binding on all men, even on a natural man, deſtitute of the Spirit, and ought to be, and may be, performed by him in a natural way; to which there is ſomething analogous in the brute creatures, whoſe eyes wait upon the Lord; "And he giveth to the beaſt his food, and unto the "young ravens which cry [m]." And we may obſerve, that the apoſtle Peter put Simon Magus upon prayer, though he was in a ſtate of unregeneracy; "Repent, ſays he [n], of this thy wickedneſs; and "pray God, if perhaps, the thought of thine heart "may be forgiven thee." 'Tis true, none but a ſpiritual man can pray in a ſpiritual manner; but then the ſpiritual man is not always under the gracious and powerful influences of the Spirit of God: He is ſometimes deſtitute of them, which ſeems to be David's caſe, when he ſaid, [o] "Caſt me not "away from thy preſence, and take not thy Holy "Spirit from me: Reſtore unto me the joy of thy "ſalvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit;" and yet we are to "pray without ceaſing, to pray "always and not faint [p]." And one thing we are to pray for is the Spirit, to influence and aſſiſt us in prayer, and to work in us whatever is well pleaſing in the ſight of God: And we have reaſon to believe that ſuch a petition will be heard and anſwer'd; for if earthly fathers "know how to give good gifts "unto their children, how much more ſhall our "heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that "aſk him [q]?" And, indeed, when we are in darkneſs and diſtreſs, without the light of God's countenance, the influences of his Spirit, and the communications of his grace, we have need of prayer

[m] Pſal. cxlv. 15. and cxlvii. 9. [n] Acts viii. 22. [o] Pſal. li. 11, 12. [p] 1 Theſſ. v. 17. Luke xviii. 1. [q] Luke xi. 13.

moſt, and ought to be moſt conſtant at "the throne "of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find "grace to help in time of need." This was David's practice[r]; "Out of the depths, ſays he, have I "cried unto thee, O Lord;" and ſo it was Jonah's, when he was in "the belly of hell, and ſaid, I am "caſt out of thy ſight; yet, ſays he, I will look "again towards thy holy temple[s]:" And he adds, "When my ſoul fainted within me, I remember'd "the Lord; and my prayer came in unto thee, into "thine holy temple." And ſo it was the practice of the church in Aſaph's time; who, under darkneſs and diſtreſs, ſaid[t], "Turn us again, O God, "and cauſe thy face to ſhine, and we ſhall be ſaved. "O Lord God of hoſts, how long wilt thou be an-"gry againſt the prayer of thy people?" But I proceed,

2. To obſerve that the apoſtle is deſirous of performing this duty of prayer, "with the underſtand-"ing alſo," *h. e.* in a language that may be underſtood by others; for, as he obſerves in *ver.* 9. "ex-"cept ye utter by the tongue words eaſy to be un-"derſtood, how ſhall it be known what is ſpoken?" And for his own part, he declares, in *ver.* 19. that he "had rather ſpeak five words in the church with "his underſtanding, that by his voice he might "teach others alſo, than ten thouſand words in an "unknown tongue." This condemns the practice of the Papiſts, who pray in a language not underſtood by the people.

Or to "pray with the underſtanding," is to pray with the underſtanding illuminated by the Spirit of God, or to pray with an experimental ſpiritual underſtanding of things. A man may uſe many words in prayer, and put up a great many petitions, and yet have no ſavoury experience, or ſpiritual underſtanding of the things he prays for. The underſtanding

[r] Pſal. cxxx. 1. [s] Jonah ii. 2, 4, 7. [t] Pſal. lxxx. 3, 4, 19

ſtanding of man is naturally dark, as to divine and ſpiritual things. The Holy Ghoſt is the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt, who enlightens the eyes of our underſtanding, to ſee our loſt ſtate and condition by nature, the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin, the impurity of our hearts, the imperfection of our obedience, the inſufficiency of our righteouſneſs, the need of Chriſt, and ſalvation by him, and the aboundings of God's grace and mercy ſtreaming through the Mediator's Perſon. Such who are thus enlighten'd, are able to "pray with "the underſtanding alſo:" They know who they pray unto, whilſt others worſhip they know not what; they can come to God as their God and Father, as the God of all grace and mercy; they know the way of acceſs to him, and are ſenſible of their need of the Spirit to influence and aſſiſt them, by whom they know what to pray for, as they ought, and are well aſſured of the readineſs of God to hear and anſwer them for Chriſt's ſake: And, ſays the apoſtle[u], "If we know that he hear us, whatſoever "we aſk, we know that we have the petitions that "we deſired of him." Theſe are the perſons who pray with the Spirit, and with the underſtanding alſo; theſe find their account in this work, and it is a delight to them.

I ſhall conclude this diſcourſe with a few words, by way of encouragement to this part of divine worſhip. It is good for the ſaints to draw near to God; it is not only good becauſe it is their duty, but becauſe it yields their ſouls a ſpiritual pleaſure; and it is alſo of great profit and advantage to them: It is often an ordinance of God, and which he owns for the quickening the graces of his Spirit, for the reſtraining and ſubduing the corruptions of our hearts, and for the bringing of our ſouls into nearer communion and fellowſhip with himſelf. Satan has often

[u] 1 John v. 15.

often felt the force and power of this piece of our ſpiritual armour; and, 'tis indeed, the laſt which the believer is directed to make uſe of. Praying ſouls are profitable in families, neighbourhoods, churches, and common-wealths, when prayerleſs ones are in a great meaſure uſeleſs. The believer has the utmoſt encouragement to this work he can deſire; he may come to God, not as on a ſeat of juſtice, but as on a throne of grace. Chriſt is the Mediator between God and him, his way of acceſs to God, and his Advocate with the Father; the Spirit is his Guide, Director, and Aſſiſter; he has many exceeding great and precious promiſes to plead with God; nor need he doubt of a kind reception, a gracious audience, and a proper anſwer, though never ſo mean and unworthy in himſelf; ſince the Lord "will regard the prayer of the deſti-" tute, and not deſpiſe his prayer."

1 Cor. xiv. 15. latter Part.

I will ſing with the Spirit, and I will ſing with the underſtanding alſo.

ON this day, in the laſt year, you were pleaſed to call me to preach to you from the former part of this verſe; which led me to diſcourſe concerning the work and duty of prayer, which, at your requeſt, was publiſhed to the world; and now, at your freſh inſtances, I am deſired to inſiſt upon the latter part of it, which regards the duty of ſinging; and, ſince the text and context were open'd ſo far as was neceſſary, in my former diſcourſe, I ſhall immediately attend to the conſideration of the ſubject before me; which I ſhall handle in the following method:

I. I ſhall endeavour to ſhew you what is ſinging, and the nature of it, as an ordinance of God.
II. Prove that it is an ordinance not confined to the Old Teſtament-diſpenſation.
III. Enquire into the ſubject-matter of ſinging, or what that is which is to be ſung.
IV. Point out to you the perſons who are to ſing. And,
V. Obſerve the manner in which this ordinance ſhould be perform'd.

I. I am to ſhew you what is ſinging, or what is the common idea we have, or can have of it. Singing may be conſider'd either in a proper, or in an improper ſenſe; when it is uſed improperly, it is aſcribed to inanimate creatures: So the heavens, the earth [a], mountains, foreſts, the trees of the wood, the paſtures

[a] Iſa. xliv. 23. and xlix. 13. 1 Chron. xvi. 33. Pſal. lxv. 13.

paſtures clothed with flocks, and the vallies covered with corn, are ſaid to ſing and ſhout for joy, or are exhorted to it: And it is alſo in this improper ſenſe that the heart is ſaid to ſing; as when Job ſays [b], "I cauſed the widow's heart to ſing for joy;" that is, greatly to rejoice; ſinging for joy being put there for great joy, which is the cauſe of it. Singing, taken in a ſtrict and proper ſenſe, and as a natural act, is an act of the tongue, or voice; though not every action of the tongue, or ſound of the voice, is to be called ſinging. Speech is an action of the tongue; but all kind of ſpeaking, or ſaying, is not ſinging. Singing is ſpeaking muſically, or with the modulation of the voice: Theſe two ſounds, ſpeaking, or ſaying, and ſinging, have not the ſame idea. When I am told, as it is commonly expreſſed, that ſuch an one ſaid grace before and after meat, I readily underſtand, that he aſked a bleſſing of God upon his food before eating, and returned thanks for it afterwards, according to the common uſe of ſpeech in prayer to God, and in converſation with men: But if it ſhould be told me, that he ſung grace before or after meat, I ſhould not be able to form any other idea of it in my mind, but that he expreſſed all this in a tonical, muſical way, with a modulation of the voice. Likewiſe it is not any clamour of the tongue, or every ſound of the voice, that is to be accounted ſinging, but an harmonious, melodious and muſical ſound of it; otherwiſe, why ſhould the tuneful and warbling notes and ſtrains of birds be called ſinging, any more than the grunting of a hog, the braying of an aſs, the neighing of a horſe, the barking of a dog, or the roaring of a lion?

Let us now conſider this action of the tongue, or voice, as perform'd religiouſly, and we ſhall find, that ſinging of God's praiſe is ſpeaking out his praiſe muſically; or it is an expreſſion of it, with the modulation

[b] Job xxix. 13.

dulation of the voice; and ſo is an ordinance diſtinct from prayer, praiſe, giving of thanks, and inward ſpiritual joy.

It is diſtinct from prayer, as is evident from my text; otherwiſe the apoſtle muſt be guilty of a moſt wretched tautology; which is by no means to be admitted of. The apoſtle James mentions prayer, and ſinging of pſalms, as two diſtinct things; to which he adviſes different perſons, or perſons under different circumſtances, when he ſays [c], "Is any "among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any mer-"ry? let him ſing pſalms." Nor ought it to be objected to us, that we ſometimes ſing petitions, or what is prayer-wiſe, ſince praying, or making petitions, is different from ſinging them: However, thoſe who are of a different mind from us about ſinging, ſhould not object this, ſince the only way of ſinging, or at leaſt, the moſt principal one, they pretend to make uſe of, is in prayer, and that is praiſing God in prayer. But,

Singing of God's praiſe is diſtinct from praiſing him; though we do praiſe him in ſinging, yet all praiſing of God is not ſinging; ſinging is one way in which we praiſe God; but there are many ways in which we praiſe him, when we cannot be ſaid to ſing: As for inſtance, we praiſe God when we give thanks unto him for mercies ſpiritual or temporal; when we ſpeak well of his adorable perfections and glorious works, either in publick or private; and we are capable of praiſing him by our lives and actions, as well as by our tongues; in neither of which ſenſes can we be ſaid to ſing. If all praiſing is ſinging, I ſhould be glad to know what ſinging of praiſe is. For

That it is different from giving of thanks, appears from the inſtitution of the Lord's ſupper; in which, giving

[c] James v. 13.

giving of thanks, and ſinging an hymn, or pſalm, as in the margin of your bibles, or a ſong of praiſe to God, are mentioned as very diſtinct things; but of this more hereafter: I ſhall now only juſt obſerve, that the apoſtle Paul, in his epiſtle to the Epheſians[d], when he exhorts them to ſing pſalms, hymns, and ſpiritual ſongs, afterwards mentions giving of thanks to God in the name of Chriſt, as another duty incumbent on them.

Nor is inward ſpiritual joy, or heart-rejoicing, ſinging of God's praiſe. True ſpiritual joy is wrought in the ſoul by the Holy Ghoſt, and takes its riſe from views of the perſon, blood, righteouſneſs, ſacrifice, and atonement of Chriſt; and is increaſed by the ſhedding abroad of the love of God in the heart, and by diſcoveries of covenant-intereſt in the Father and in the Son. Now when the ſoul is in ſuch a comfortable ſituation, 'tis in the moſt agreeable frame to ſing the praiſes of God; hence ſays James, "is any "merry?" εὐθυμεῖ τίς, is any of a good mind, or in a good frame of ſoul? "let him ſing pſalms:" Not that theſe are the only perſons that are to ſing pſalms, or this the only time, any more than that afflicted perſons are the only ones that are to pray, and the time of affliction the only time of prayer: But as affliction more eſpecially calls for prayer, ſo ſpiritual joy and rejoicing, for ſinging of pſalms; but then this ſpiritual joy is not ſinging, but the cauſe or reaſon of it, and what eminently fits a perſon for it.

Though there is ſuch a thing as mental prayer, there is no ſuch thing as mental ſinging, or ſinging in the heart without the voice; ſpeaking or preaching without a tongue, or voice, are not greater contradictions, or rather impoſſibilities, than ſinging without a tongue or voice is; ſuch an hypotheſis is ſuited for no ſcheme but Quakeriſm: And we may as well have our ſilent meetings, dumb preaching, and

[d] Chap. v. 19, 20.

and mute prayer, as ſilent ſinging. Singing and making melody in the heart, is no other than ſinging with or from the heart, or heartily[e]; or, as it is expreſſed in a parallel place, with grace in the heart; *i. e.* either with gratitude and thankfulneſs, or with grace in exerciſe, together with the voice.

Singing of God's praiſes is a vocal action, and ſhould be performed in a ſocial way, in concert with others; "with the voice together ſhall they ſing[f];" and not only with the voice, but with the modulation of it: It is not any noiſe of the tongue or voice, but an harmonious, melodious, joyful one. [g] "O "come, let us ſing unto the Lord; let us make a "joyful noiſe to the rock of our ſalvation: Let us "come before his preſence with thankſgiving, and "make a joyful noiſe unto him with pſalms." But,

II. I ſhall endeavour to prove, that this ordinance of ſinging does not belong to the ceremonial law, or was confined to the Old Teſtament-diſpenſation; but is a part of natural religion, and moral worſhip, perpetually binding on all mankind; and ſo to be performed by believers in a ſpiritual and evangelic manner, under the goſpel-diſpenſation. And,

1. It will appear, from the practice of the Heathens, that it was a part of natural and moral worſhip; who, though greatly in the dark, both about the object and manner of worſhip, yet, by the dim light of nature, groped after the knowledge of both, if haply they might find them; and as by this dim light they were directed to pray to a ſuperior Being when in diſtreſs, as Jonah's mariners did; ſo, by the ſame light, they were directed to ſing praiſes to him when they received mercies; prayer and ſinging being alike parts of natural religion and moral worſhip. So that though the Gentiles had no poſitive laws nor

[e] Nuſquam enim legimus aliquem ſine voce cantaſſe. Unde neceſſe eſt hic, in corde, ex corde intelligi: Scilicet ut non ſolum ore, ſed etiam corde cantemus. *Hieronym.* in Col. 3, 16.

[f] Iſa. lii. 8. [g] Pſal. xcv. 1, 2.

scheme of revelation to guide them in the worship of God, yet, in some instances, did, " by nature, the " things contained in the law; which shew the work " of the law written on their hearts." I will just produce some few instances respecting the present case. Clemens Alexandrinus intimates, that one part of the religious worship of the Egyptians, consisted of hymns to their gods; his words are these; " First a singer goes before, bringing forth some one " thing of the symbols of music; and they say, that " he ought to take two books out of those of Her- " mes, the one containing the hymns of the gods, " the other, the method of a royal life." And a little after, he adds; " There are ten things which are " suitable to the honour of their gods, and contain " the Egyptian religion, as sacrifices, first fruits, " hymns, prayers, shews, feasts, and such like things[h]." This is confirmed by Porphyry, who says, that the Egyptians devote " the day to the worship of their " gods; in which, three or four times, *viz.* morn- " ing and evening, noon and sun-setting, they sing " hymns unto them[i]." The same Porphyry says, concerning the Indians, that " they spend " the greatest part of the day and night in prayers " and hymns to the gods[k]:" And moreover, that " when they commit their bodies to the flames, that " they may, in the purest manner, separate the soul " from

[h] Πρῶτος μὲν γὰρ προέρχεται ὁ ᾠδὸς ἓν τι τῶν τῆς μουσικῆς ἐπιφερόμενος συμβόλων· τοῦτον φασι δύο βίβλους ἀναιλαφέναι δεῖν ἐκ τῶν Ερμοῦ. Ὧν θάτερον μέν, ὕμνους περιέχει Θεῶν, ἐκλογισμὸν δὲ βασιλικῆς βίου τὸ δεύτερον. Paulo post, δέκα δὲ ἐστι τὰ εἰς τὴν τιμὴν ἀνήκοντα τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς Θεῶν, καὶ τὴν Αἰγυπτίων Εὐσέβειαν περιέχοντα· οἷον περὶ θυμάτων, ἀπαρχῶν, ὕμνων, εὐχῶν. πομπῶν, ἑορτῶν, καὶ τῶν τούτοις ὁμοίων. *Clem. Alex.* Stromat. l. 6. p. 633 Ed. *Paris.*

[i] Ἡμέραν δὲ εἰς θεραπείαν τῶν Θεῶν, καθ' ἣν ἢ τρὶς ἢ τέτρακις, καλὰ τὴν ἕω, καὶ τὴν ἑσπέραν, μεσεμβρινὰ τε τὸν ἥλιον καὶ πρὸς δύσιν καλαφερόμενον τέτρις ὑμνοῦσιν. *Porphyr.* de Abstinent. l. 4. §. 8. p. 153. Ed. *Cantabr.*

[k] Τὸν τοίνον χρόνον τῆς ἡμέρας, καὶ τῆς νυκτὸς τὸν πλεῖστον εἰς ὕμνους τῶν Θεῶν ἀπένειμαν καὶ εὐχάς. Ib. §. 12. p. 168.

" from the body, they sing an hymn, and die[l]." And, in another place, explaining that symbol of Pythagoras, " That drink-offerings are to be poured " out to the gods, by the ear of the cups; by this, " says he, is intimated, that we ought to honour the " gods, and sing hymns to them with music, for " this goes through the ears[m]". Very remarkable is a passage of Arrianus, the stoic philosopher; " If, " says he, we are intelligent creatures, what else " should we do, both in public and private, than " to sing an hymn to the Deity, to speak well of " him, and give thanks unto him? Should we not, " whether digging or plowing, or eating, sing an " hymn to God? Great is God, who has given us " these instruments, by which we till the earth. " Great is God, that has given us hands, a faculty " of swallowing, and a belly; that we secretly grow " and increase, and that, whilst we sleep, we breathe; " each of these things ought to be taken notice of in " an hymn: But the greatest and most divine hymn " we ought to sing is, that he has given us a reason- " able faculty of using these things in a right way: " What shall I say, since many of you are blind? " ought not some one to fill up this place, and give " out an hymn to God for you all?——If I was a " nightingale, I would do as a nightingale; and if " a swan, as a swan; but since I am a rational crea- " ture, I ought to praise God; this is my work; " this I will do; nor will I desert this station to the " utmost of my power; and I exhort you to the self " same song[n]." And in another place he says, " This

[l] Πυρὶ τὸ σῶμα παραδόντες, ὅπως δὲ καθαρωτήτην ἀποκρίνωσι τῷ σώματι τὴν ψυχὴν ὑμνήμενοι τελευτῶσιν. Ibid. §. 18. p. 170.

[m] Σπονδάς τε ποιεῖσθαι τοῖς Θεοῖς καλὰ τὸ ἓς τῶν ἐκπωμάτων. Ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ ἠνίττετο τιμᾶν τὰς Θεὰς καὶ ὑμνεῖν τῇ μουσικῇ, αὕτη γὰρ διὰ ὤτων χωρεῖ. Ib. de vita *Pythag.* p. 200. Ed. *Cantabr.*

[n] Εἰ γὰρ νῦν εἴχομεν, ἄλλο τι ἔδει ἡμᾶς ποιεῖν καὶ κοινῇ καὶ ἰδίᾳ, ἢ ὑμνεῖν τὸ Θεῖον, καὶ εὐφημεῖν, καὶ ἐπεξέρχεσθαι τὰς χάριτας; ἐν ἔδει καὶ σκάπτοντας, καὶ ἀρῶντας καὶ ἐσθίοντας, ἄδειν τὸν ὕμνον τὸν εἰς τὸν Θεόν; μέγας ὁ Θεός, ὅτι ἡμῖν

" This is my work whilst I live, to sing an hymn " to God, both by myself, and before one or ma- " ny [o]". Much of this language would well become the mouth of a Christian. It is observed concerning the muses [p], that they were chiefly employed about the hymns and worship of the gods; and that some of them had their names from thence, as Melpomene, Terpsichore, and Polymnia; and that Homer [q] got so much credit, admiration, and applause as he did, was owing, among other things, to the hymns which he composed for the gods; and there is still extant, among his works, an hymn to Apollo. Moreover, formerly rewards were proposed in the Pythian games [r], for such who best sung an hymn to the God. And Julian [s], the emperor, takes notice of many excellent hymns of the gods, which he advises to learn, as being of great use in the knowledge of things sacred; most of which, he says, were composed by the gods; some few by men inspired by a divine spirit. From these, and other instances which might be produced, we may conclude, that the Gentiles were obliged, by the law of nature, to this part of worship, and, by the light of nature, were

ἡμῖν παρέσχεν ὄργανα ταῦτα, δι' ὧν τὴν γῆν ἐργασόμεθα· μέγας ὁ Θεός, ὅτι χεῖρας δέδωκεν, ὅτι καλάποσιν, ὅτι κοιλίαν, ὅτι αὐξεσθαι λεληθότως, ὅτι καθευδοντας ἀναπνεῖν. Ταῦτα ἐφ' ἑκάστῳ ἐφυμνεῖν ἔδει, καὶ τὸν μέγιστον, καὶ θειότατον ὕμνον ἐφυμνεῖν, ὅτι τὴν δύναμιν ἔδωκε τὴν παρακολουθητικὴν τούτων, καὶ ὁδῶ χρησικήν· τί οὖν, ἐπεὶ οἱ πολλοὶ ἀποτυφλωσθε, οὐκ ἔδει τίνα εἶναι τὸν ταύτην ἐκπληροῦντα τὴν χώραν, καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων διαδιδόντα τὸν ὕμνον τὸν εἰς τὸν Θεόν;——εἰ γὰρ ἀηδὼν ἦμην, ἐποίουν τὰ τῆς ἀηδόνος, εἰ κύκνος τὰ τῆ κύκνε, νῦν δὲ λογικός εἰμι, ὑμνεῖν με δεῖ τὸν Θεόν· τοῦτο μοῦ τὸ ἔργον ἐστι. Ποιῶ αὐτό, οὐδ' ἐγκαταλείψω τὴν τάξιν ταύτην, ἐφόσον ἂν δίδοται· καὶ ὑμᾶς ἐπὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ταυτην ὠδὴν παρακαλῶ. *Arrian.* Epictet. l. 1. c. 16, p. 127, 128. Ed. *Cantabr.*

[o] Καὶ ζῶντός μοῦ τοῦτο τὸ ἔργον ἦν, ὑμνεῖν τὸν Θεόν, καὶ αὐτὸν ἐπ' ἐμαυτοῦ, καὶ πρὸς ἕνα, καὶ πρὸς πολλούς. Ib. l. 3. c. 26. p. 350.

[p] *Phurnutus* de natura deorum, p. 22, 23. Ed. *Gale.*

[q] *Herodotus* de vita *Homeri*, c 9. p. 58. Ed. *Gronov.*

[r] *Pausanias* in *Phocicis*, five l. 10. p. 620. Ed. *Hanov.*

[s] Opera, p. 551. Ed. *Paris.* 4°. 1630, of these hymns to the gods, see more in *Alex.* ab *Alex.* Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 17. prope finem.

were directed to it; and conſequently that it is a part of natural religion and moral worſhip. Moreover,

2. It is evident, that the people of God ſung ſongs of praiſe to him before the law was given by Moſes. When the Lord ſo remarkably appeared for the children of Iſrael, by delivering them out of the hands of the Egyptians, and carrying them ſafely through the Red-Sea, though their enemies were drowned in it; "Then ſang Moſes and the children of Iſrael this "ſong, unto the Lord, and ſpake, ſaying, I will "ſing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed glo-"rioufly; the horſe and his rider hath he thrown "into the ſea[t], *&c.*" Miriam and the Iſraelitiſh women, ſung the ſame. This is the firſt ſong the ſcriptures make mention of; though, the Jews [u] ſay, Adam ſung one before. Now, by what law did the Iſraelites ſing this ſong? it could not be by the Levitical law; for that ſyſtem of laws was not as yet given to that people; and when that body of laws was delivered to them, we do not find that ſinging of God's praiſes was any part of it; it is not to be met with in the whole body of Jewiſh laws, given out by Moſes; why then ſhould it be reckoned of ceremonious inſtitution, or a part of worſhip peculiar to the Old Teſtament? Nor was it by any poſitive law, or according to any part of external revelation God had made to the ſons of men, the children of Iſrael ſung; for no ſuch poſitive law was extant, or any ſuch revelation made, as we know of: It remains then, that in doing this, they acted according to the dictates of their conſciences, and the examples which might have been before them, by which they were influenced, as to cry to the Lord when in diſtreſs, ſo to ſing his praiſes when they were delivered.

3. It may eaſily be obſerv'd, that when pſalmody was in the moſt flouriſhing condition among the Iſraelites,

[t] Exod. xv. 1, 20, 21. [u] *Vid.* Targum, in Cant. i. 1. and my notes upon it.

raelites, under the direction and influence of David their king, the ſweet Pſalmiſt of Iſrael, it was not confined to that people; but all nations of the earth were called upon, and exhorted to ſing the praiſes of God, even by the Pſalmiſt himſelf; "Make a joy-"ful noiſe unto God, all ye lands," *Heb.* all the earth, "ſing forth the honour of his name; make "his praiſe glorious. Let the people praiſe thee, "O God, let all the people praiſe thee. O let the "nations be glad and ſing for joy; for thou ſhalt "judge the people righteouſly, and govern the na-"tions upon earth. Selah. O ſing unto the Lord "a new ſong; ſing unto the Lord all the earth, "ſing unto the Lord; bleſs his name, ſhew forth "his ſalvation from day to day[w]." Now if ſinging was not a part of moral worſhip, but of a ceremonious kind, and peculiar to the Old Teſtament-diſpenſation, the nations of the earth would have had no concern in it; it would not have been obligatory upon them, but proper only to the Iſraelites, to whom alone pertaineth the giving of the law and the ſervice of God.

4. Nothing is more manifeſt, than that when ceremonial worſhip was in its greateſt glory, and legal ſacrifices in higheſt eſteem, that ſinging of Pſalms and ſpiritual ſongs was preferred unto them, as being more acceptable to God; "I will praiſe the name "of God with a ſong, and will magnify him with "thankſgiving, ſays David; This alſo ſhall pleaſe "the Lord better than an ox or bullock, that hath "horns and hoofs[x]." Now can any other reaſon of this difference be given, than that the ſacrifice of an ox or bullock was of ceremonial inſtitution; whereas, praiſing God was a part of moral worſhip, which might be performed in a ſpiritual and evangelic manner?

5. When

[w] Pſal. lxvi. 1, 2. lxvii. 3, 4. and xcvi. 1, 2. [x] Pſal. lxix. 30, 31.

5. When the ceremonial law, with all its instituted rites, was abolished, this duty of singing remained in full force. The apostle Paul, in his epistles written to the churches at Ephesus and Colosse, declares in the one, that the middle wall of partition, between Jew and Gentile, was broken down: Meaning the ceremonial law, and that which was the cause of enmity between both; even "the "law of commandments, contained in ordinances, "was abolished[y]:" And in the other, says, "Let "no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in re-"spect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of "the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to "come, but the body is of Christ[z];" and yet, in both[a], exhorts them to sing "psalms, hymns, and "spiritual songs." Now it is not reasonable to suppose, that the same apostle, in the same epistles, written to the same persons, should declare them disengaged from some things, and under obligation to regard others, if these equally belonged to the ceremonial law, and were alike peculiar to the Old Testament-dispensation.

6. This practice of singing the praises of God, has been performed by creatures who were never subject to the ceremonial law; by whom I mean not the Gentiles, who have been already taken notice of, but the angels, who, though subject to the moral law, so far as their nature and condition will admit of; yet, in no one instance, were ever concerned in ceremonial service. Now these holy and spiritual beings were very early employed in this divine and heavenly work of singing; these morning stars, so called for their brightness and glory, sang together; these sons of God, by creation, shouted for joy, when the foundations of the earth were fastened, and the corner

[y] Eph. ii. 14, 15. [z] Col. ii. 16, 17. [a] Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16.

corner stone thereof laid[b]: As they did also when the corner stone of man's redemption was laid in the incarnation of the Son of God; at which time "there was with the angel, a multitude of the hea-"venly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to "God in the highest, and on earth peace, good "will towards men[c];" who likewise will join with the saints in Hallelujahs and songs of praise to God, throughout an endless eternity. For,

7. We may say of this duty what the apostle says of charity[d], that it never faileth, though prophesies, tongues, and knowledge shall. For, when all ordinances, whether of a moral nature, or of positive institution, shall cease, such as prayer, preaching, baptism, the Lord's-supper, and the like; this will continue, and be in its greatest glory and perfection. This will be the employment of saints when raised out of their dusty beds, on the resurrection morn, in the power and virtue of the resurrection of their risen Lord. "Thy dead men shall live, together with, or "as my dead body, shall they arise: Awake and "sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as "the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the "dead[e]:" These having their souls and bodies re-united, shall come to the Zion above, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: These shall stand upon the mount with the Lamb, and sing in the height of it, even that new song which no one can learn, but those who are redeemed from the earth. But I proceed,

III. To consider the subject-matter of singing, or what that is which is to be sung. The direction of the apostle Paul in this case, is certainly to be regarded, who, in two distinct epistles[f], exhorts to the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; and what these are, it will be proper to enquire. And,

1. By

[b] Job xxxviii. 6, 7. [c] Luke ii. 14. [d] 1 Cor. xiii. 8.
[e] Isa. xxvi. 19. [f] Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16.

1. By psalms, is meant the book of psalms, composed by David, Asaph, Heman, and others, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God; which is the only sense in which this word is used throughout the whole New Testament: Nor is there any reason to believe, that the apostle Paul designs any other in the above-mentioned places; or the apostle James, when he says[g], "Is any merry? let him sing psalms." Those who are of a different mind, ought to shew in what other sense this word is used, and where, and what those psalms are we are to sing, if not the psalms of David, *&c.* since it is certain, there are psalms which are to be sung under the New Testament-dispensation.

2. By hymns, we are to understand, not such as are composed by good men, without the inspiration of the Spirit of God. I observe indeed, from ancient writers, and from ecclesiastical history[h], that such compositions were made use of very early, even from the times of the apostles; and I deny not but that they may now be useful; though a great deal of care should be taken that they be agreeable to the sacred writings, and the analogy of faith, and that they be expressed, as much as can be, in scripture-language; yet, after all, I must confess, that I cannot but judge them, in a good measure, unnecessary, since we are so well provided with a book of psalms, and scriptural songs, indited by the Spirit of God, and suitable on all occasions: However, I cannot think that such compositures are designed by the apostle; nor can I believe that he would place such

[g] James v. 13. [h] *Clemens Alexandr.* Paedagog. l. 3. c. 12. in fine, p. 266. Ed. *Paris.* *Tertullian.* Apolog. c. 39. p. 36. Ed. *Rigalt.* *Euseb.* Eccles. Hist. l. 2. c. 17. p. 55, 56. and l. 5. c. 28. p. 196. and l. 7. c. 24. p. 271. Ed. *Vales.* Of these hymns, see more in *Fabricii* Biblioth. Graec. Vol. 5. c. 1. p. 195, 196, *&c.* and Bibliograph. Antiq. c. 11. p. 368, *&c.* These were first objected to by *Paul* of *Samosata.* *Euseb.* l. 7. c. 30. p. 281. and prohibited by the council of *Laodicea*, in Can. 59.

between psalms and spiritual songs, made by men inspired by the Holy Ghost, and put them upon a level with them, to be sung equally with them, to the edification of the churches; therefore, I take hymns to be but another name for the book of psalms; for the running title of that book may as well be, the book of hymns, as of psalms; and so it is render'd by Ainsworth, who also particularly calls the 145th psalm, an hymn of David: So the psalm which our Lord sung with his disciples, after the supper, is called an hymn, as the psalms of David in general, are called, by Philo the Jew [i], ὕμνοι, hymns, as they are also songs and hymns by Josephus [k].

3. By spiritual songs, may be meant the same psalms of David, Asaph, &c. the titles of some of which, are [l], songs, as sometimes a psalm and song, a song and psalm, a song of degrees, and the like; together with all other scriptural songs, written by men inspired by God; and are called spiritual, because the author of them is the Spirit of God, the writers of them men moved and acted by the same Spirit; the subject-matter of them spiritual, designed for spiritual edification, and opposed to all profane, loose and wanton songs.

These three words, psalms, hymns, and songs, answer to מזמורים, תהלים, and שירים, the titles of David's psalms; and are, by the Septuagint, rendered by the Greek words the apostle uses. I shall not trouble you with observing to you how these three are distinguished by learned men [m], one from another, but only observe, what has been remarked by others before me; that whereas the apostle, in his exhortations to singing, directs to the titles of David's psalms, it is highly reasonable to conclude, that

[i] L. de Mutat. nom. & l. de Somniis & alibi. [k] Antiq. l. 7. c. 12. [l] So Psal. xxx, xlv, xlvi, xlviii, lxv, lxvi. lxvii, lxviii, lxxv, lxxvi, lxxxiii, lxxxvii, lxxxviii, xcii, cviii, cxxvi, to cxxxiv. [m] Vid. *Zanchium, Grotium, & Hammond*, in Eph. v. 19. *Bezam* in Col. iii. 16. & *Leigh*'s Critica Sacra in voce, ὑμνος.

that it was his intention that we should sing them: But, inasmuch as there are some queries, scruples, and objections about the singing of them, it will be proper to attempt a satisfactory answer to them.

(1.) It is inquired, whether the book of Psalms was originally written in verse or metre? The reason of this enquiry is, that if it should appear that it was not originally written in Hebrew metre, then there is no reason why it should be translated into metre in another language, and so consequently not to be sung in the manner we do. To which, I answer, That the book of Psalms, with some other writings of the Old Testament, were originally written in metre, is universally allowed by the Jews, and does also appear from the different accentuation of them, from that of other books. Josephus[n], a learned Jew, says, "That David being free from "war, and enjoying a profound peace, composed "songs and hymns to God, of various metre; some "trimetre, *i. e.* consisting of three feet, and others "pentametre, *i. e.* of five feet." David's Psalms seem to be of the Lyric kind; hence Jerom, who, of all the fathers, best understood the Hebrew language, calls "David, our Simonides, Pindar, Al-"caeus, Flaccus, Catullus, and Serenus," who were all of them Lyric poets. And, in another place, he says, "If it should seem incredulous to any that the "Hebrews have metre, or that the Psalms or the "Lamentations of Jeremiah, or almost all the "scriptural songs are composed after the manner of "our Flaccus, and the Greek Pindar, and Alcaeus, "and Sappho; let him read Philo, Josephus, Eu-"sebius Caesarienſis, and he will find, by their testi-"monies,

[n] Ἀπηλλαγμένῳ δ' ἤδη πολέμων ὁ Δαβίδης, καὶ βαθείας ἀπολαυὼν τὸ λοιπὸν εἰρήνης, ᾠδὰς εἰς τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ ὕμνους, συνέλαξεν μέτρα ποικίλα. Τὰς γὰρ τριμέτρους, τὰς δὲ πενταμέτρους ἐποίησεν. *Joseph.* Antiq. l. 7. c. 12. §. 3.

"monies, that what I say is true[o]." The learned Gomarus, in his Lyra[p], has given out of the Psalms, and other poetical books of the scriptures, several hundred of instances of verse of the Iambic, Trochaic, Dactylic, Anapaestic, Choriambic, Ionic, Antispastic, and Paeonic kind, which he has compared with a like number out of Pindar and Sophocles. The Jews indeed have now lost the knowledge of the sacred poetry, and have been, for many hundred of years, unacquainted with it; though R. Benjamin Tudelensis [q] says, that there lived in his time, at Bagdad, one R. Eleazar, and his brethren, who knew how to sing the songs as the singers did, when the temple was standing. But be this as it will, there is reason enough to conclude, that the book of Psalms was originally written in verse; and therefore it is lawful to be translated into verse, in order to be sung in the churches of Christ.

(2.) It is queried, whether the book of Psalms is suitable to the present gospel-dispensation, and proper to be sung in gospel-churches. I answer, Nothing is more suitable to the gospel-state, or more proper to be sung in the churches of Christ; since it is so full of prophecies concerning the person, offices, grace and kingdom of the Messiah; concerning his sufferings, and death, his resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God; which are now more clearly understood, and are capable of being sung by believers, in a more evangelic manner than when they were first composed: Besides, this

[o] *David, Simonides* noster, *Pindarus & Alcaeus, Flaccus* quoque *Catullus & Serenus* Christum lyra personat. *Hieron.* Ep. ad *Paulin.* inter opera ejus. Tom. 3. p. 3. Ed. *Paris.* Quod si cui videtur incredulum metra scilicet esse apud *Hebraeos*, & in morem nostri *Flacci, Graecique Pindari & Alcaei*, & *Sapphus*, vel *Psalterium*, vel *Lamentationes Hieremiae*, vel omnia ferme scripturarum cantica comprehendi, legat *Philonem, Josephum, Origenem, Caesariensem Eusebium*, & eorum testimonio me verum dicere comprobabit. Ib. p. 8. [p] Inter ejus opera. Tom. 2. p. 317, &c.

[q] *R. Benjamin. Massaot* vel Itinerarium. p. 70, 71. Ed. *L'Empereur.*

this book is full of exceeding great and precious promiſes, as the ground of the faith and hope of God's people; it is a large fund of experience, a rich mine of goſpel-grace and truth, and is abundantly ſuited to every caſe, ſtate and condition, the church of Chriſt, or a particular believer, is in at any time. A little care and prudence uſed in the choice of proper pſalms, on particular occaſions, would fully diſcover the truth of this.

(3.) It is objected, that perſons often meet with things which are not, and which they cannot make their own caſe; yea, ſometimes with what is ſhocking and ſtartling to a Chriſtian mind; ſuch as imprecations and curſes, on enemies or wicked men. And it is aſked, Should perſons ſing caſes not their own, and ſuch things as theſe now mentioned; would they not be guilty of lying to God, and of want of that charity to men which is ſo much recommended under the goſpel-diſpenſation? To which, I reply, That as to ſinging caſes not our own, this is no more lying to God than reading them is, ſinging being but a ſlower way of pronunciation in a muſical manner; therefore, if this ought to deter perſons from ſinging, it ſhould alſo from reading: Beſides, in public worſhip, we ſing not as ſingle perſons, but in conjunction with, and as parts of the community, and body of the people; ſo that what may not be ſuitable to one, may be ſo to another, and in both, the end of praiſe be anſwered. Moreover, when we ſing the caſes of others, and which we cannot make our own, we ſing them as ſuch, and not as our own ſenſe and experience; which yet may be very uſeful to us, either by way of example, or advice, or comfort, or inſtruction, or admonition, and the like: And if this ſhould not be the caſe, yet there are two other principal ends of ſinging, *viz.* the praiſe and glory of God, and the edification of others, which may be attained this way; and, after all, the ſame

objection

objection will lie againſt public prayer, as much as againſt public ſinging; ſince no prayer put up by the miniſter, in public, at leaſt, not all the petitions in it, any more than every pſalm or hymn, ſung in public, are ſuitable to the caſes of all perſons preſent; yet this has not been thought a ſufficient argument againſt public prayer, or to deter perſons from joining in it. As for imprecations and curſes on wicked men, though the ſcriptural inſtances of them are no examples to us to do the like; becauſe theſe were made by men under the inſpiration of the Spirit of God; yet they were prophetic hints of ruin and deſtruction to wicked men, and as ſuch ſhould be conſidered, and may be ſung by us, and that to the glory of God and ſome inſtruction to ourſelves; for herein we may obſerve the juſtice and holineſs of God, the vile nature of ſin, the indignation of God againſt it, and the juſt abhorrence and deteſtation that ſin and ſinners are had in with God, and ſhould be had in with all good men.

(4.) It is ſaid, that if we muſt ſing the pſalms of David, and others, then we muſt ſing by a form; and if we may ſing by a form, why not pray by one? I anſwer, the caſe is different; the ordinance of prayer may be performed without a form, but not the ordinance of ſinging: The Spirit of God is promiſed as a Spirit of grace and ſupplication, but not as a ſpirit of poetry. And ſuppoſe a perſon had a gift of delivering out an extempore pſalm or hymn, that pſalm or hymn would be a form to the reſt that joined with him; unleſs we ſuppoſe a whole congregation to have ſuch a gift, and every one ſing his own pſalm or hymn; but then that, namely, joining voices together, which is the beauty, glory, and harmony of this ordinance, would be mere jargon, confuſion, and diſcord. Beſides, we have a book of pſalms, but we have not a prayer-book: Had we a book of prayers, compoſed by men inſpired by the Spirit of God,

as we have a book of pſalms made by ſuch, we ſhould think ourſelves under equal obligation to pray by a form, as we now do to ſing by one. Add to this, that the pſalms of David were compoſed on purpoſe to be ſung by a form, in the very expreſs words of them, as they accordingly were. David, when he had wrote them, ſent them to Aſaph, and his brethren, or to the chief muſician, the maſter of the ſong, who had the management of it, or ſome ſuch perſon, to be made uſe of in public; for thus it is written[r], "Then on that day David delivered "firſt this pſalm, to thank the Lord, into the hands "of Aſaph and his brethren." And we may obſerve, that ſome hundreds of years after, the pſalms of David and Aſaph were ſung in the expreſs words of them, by the order of king Hezekiah; for ſo it is ſaid[s], "Moreover, Hezekiah, the king and the "princes, commanded the Levites to ſing praiſe "unto the Lord, with the words of David and of "Aſaph, the ſeer; and they ſang praiſes with gladneſs, and they bowed their heads and worſhipped." Hence alſo, when the people of God were exhorted to ſing his praiſe, they were bid not to make, but take a pſalm, ready made to their hands[t]; "Sing aloud unto God our ſtrength; make a joyful noiſe unto the God of Jacob; take a pſalm, "and bring hither the timbrel, the pleaſant harp, "with the pſaltery." Which leads me,

(5.) To conſider another objection made againſt ſinging the pſalms of David. The ſinging of theſe was formerly attended with the uſe of muſical inſtruments; ſuch as the harp, timbrel, cymbals, and the like: If then they are to be ſung now, why not with theſe inſtruments, as heretofore? and if theſe are diſuſed, why ſhould not ſinging itſelf? I reply, That the uſe of muſical inſtruments was not eſſential to

[r] 1 Chron. xvi. 7. [s] 2 Chron. xxix. 30. [t] Pſal. lxxxi. 1, 2.

to singing; therefore, though these are laid aside, that continues. The Old Testament-dispensation was a showy, gaudy, and pompous one, suited to the then infant state of the church; there were many ceremonious rites which attended the worship of God, even that part of it which was of a moral nature; which ceremonious rites, though now abolished, the worship being of a moral nature, remains in full force: As for instance; it was usual to burn incense at the time of prayer; now the use of incense, which was typical of the acceptance of the prayers of the saints, through the mediation of Christ, is laid aside; but the duty of prayer, being of a moral nature, continues: So the use of musical instruments, which attended the work of singing the praises of God, and were typical of inward spiritual melody, is at an end, when singing, being equally of a moral nature with prayer, is still obligatory. It is now sufficient, if, when we sing vocally, at the same time we make melody in our hearts to the Lord. I close this with an observation of an ancient writer[u]; "Barely to "sing, says he, is not fit for babes, but to sing "with inanimate instruments, with cymbals, and "with dancing; wherefore, in the churches (*i. e.* "under the gospel-dispensation) the use of such in-"struments, and others, fit for babes, is taken "away, and bare or plain singing remains." I proceed,

IV. To point out to you the persons who are to sing, and who ought to be found in the performance of this duty: I shall take no notice of a private person's singing by himself, alone, or of the family-discharge

[u] Ὃυ τὸ ᾄσαι ἁπλῶς ἐστὶ τοῖς νηπίοις ἁρμόδιον, ἀλλὰ τὸ μετὰ τῶν ἀψύχων ὀργάνων ᾄσαι, καὶ μετὰ ὀρχήσεως καὶ κρότων; διὸ ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις προαίρεται (lege, παρῄρηται) ἐκ τῶν ἀσμάτων ἡ χρῆσις τῶν τοιούτων ὀργάνων, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν νηπίοις ὕλων ἁρμοδίων, καὶ ὑπολέλειπται τὸ ᾄσαι ἁπλῶς. Autor Quaest. & Respons. ad orthodox. inter *Justin.* opera, p. 462. Ed. *Paris.*

diſcharge of this duty, or of its being done in concert, between two or more perſons; no doubt but it is lawful for a ſingle perſon to ſing the praiſes of God alone, at home, in his own houſe, in his cloſet, when he thinks proper; and it may very laudably be performed in Chriſtian families, where they are able to carry it on with decency and good order; yea, any two, or more perſons, may join together in this part of divine ſervice, as Paul and Silas did in priſon[w], who, "at midnight, prayed and ſang "praiſes unto God;" which is an inſtance of ſinging vocally, and in concert; and was attended with ſome miraculous operations, with which all goſpel-ordinances were at firſt confirmed; and which brought on, and iſſued in the converſion of the jailor. But what I ſhall chiefly attend to, will be to prove that goſpel-churches, or the churches of Chriſt, under the goſpel-diſpenſation, ought to ſing the praiſes of God vocally; and this I ſhall do from the following conſiderations.

1. From the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, which declare, that the churches, in goſpel-times, ſhould ſing; and in which they are called upon, exhorted, and encouraged to do it. In many of the pſalms, which reſpect the times of the Meſſiah, and the gathering of the Gentiles to him under the goſpel-diſpenſation, ſuch as the 47th, 68th, and 95th, the people of God are frequently invited to ſing praiſe unto him, and make a joyful noiſe unto him with pſalms. Likewiſe, in the prophecies of Iſaiah[x], it is declared, that not only the watchmen, goſpel-miniſters, ſuch whoſe feet are beautiful on the mountains, who bring good tidings, and publiſh peace and ſalvation, "ſhall lift up the voice, and "that with the voice together ſhall they ſing;" but alſo the churches under their care, and ſuch ſouls

[w] Acts xvi. 25. [x] Iſa. lii. 7, 8, 9. and xxxv. 1, 2, 6, 10. and xxvi. 1. and liv. 1.

they are made uſeful to, are called upon to "break "forth into joy, and ſing together;" yea, it is promiſed, that the Gentile church, under the name of "the wilderneſs, and ſolitary place, ſhall be glad "and rejoice, even with joy and ſinging; that even "the tongue of the dumb ſhall ſing, and the ran-"ſomed of the Lord return, and come to Zion "with ſongs and everlaſting joy upon their heads." Moreover, that in that day, meaning the goſpel-day, ſhall this ſong be ſung in the land of Judah, in the goſpel-church: "We have a ſtrong city; ſal-"vation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." To add no more, how expreſly is the Gentile church exhorted and encouraged to this work, in another part of theſe prophecies? where it is ſaid, "Sing, "O barren, thou that didſt not bear; break forth "into ſinging, and cry aloud, thou that didſt not "travail with child; for more are the children of "the deſolate than the children of the married wife, "ſaith the Lord." Bleſſed be God, theſe predictions are, in a great meaſure, fulfilled; goſpel-churches among the Gentiles, as well as in the land of Judea, have lift up their voices, and ſung the praiſes of God according to theſe prophecies; which is, at once, a confirmation of the authority of the ſcriptures, and of the truth of this ordinance. But,

2. I prove it to be a duty incumbent on goſpel-churches, under the New Teſtament-diſpenſation, from expreſs precepts and directions given to them concerning it. It is not only propheſied of in the Old Teſtament, but it is alſo commanded in the New, that they ſhould ſing. The church at Epheſus was a goſpel-church, as was alſo that at Coloſſe; and they are both expreſly enjoined as ſuch, by the apoſtle Paul, who in this, as in other things, had the mind of Chriſt, to "ſing pſalms, hymns, and ſpiri-"tual ſongs[r]." Beſides, if ſinging was not a duty belong-

[r] Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16.

belonging to New Teſtament-churches, why ſhould any directions about it be given to them? ſuch as to ſing with grace in their hearts, with the ſpirit, and with the underſtanding; and to do it in ſuch a manner, ſo as to ſpeak to themſelves, and to teach and admoniſh one another [z].

3. That New Teſtament-churches ſhould ſing, will more fully appear from New Teſtament-inſtances and examples. There are not only prophecies and precepts, but alſo precedents in favour of this practice; and the firſt inſtance of this kind I ſhall mention, is, that of Chriſt and his apoſtles, who ſung an hymn, as a church, at the cloſe of the Lord's-ſupper; of this the evangeliſt aſſures us; "When they had "ſung an hymn, ſays he, they went out unto the "mount of olives [a]:" Our ears are continually dinned, by thoſe who are of a different mind from us, with an old tranſlation, in which, they ſay, the words are rendered, "When they had given thanks." But, Firſt, This work was done already; "he, *i. e.* "Chriſt, took the cup, and gave thanks." Secondly, A different word from that is here uſed, and which, in its firſt and primary ſenſe, ſignifies to ſing an hymn, or ſong, to the honour of God. And, Thirdly, This old tranſlation muſt be a falſe one, ſince it fixes ſuch a character of rudeneſs and arrogance upon the apoſtles, as is unbecoming the diſciples of the meek and lowly Jeſus; what, they give thanks! what buſineſs had they to give thanks? Had they done ſo, they had took upon them an office, and thruſt themſelves into a province that did not belong to them. Who ſhould give thanks but Chriſt, the maſter of the feaſt, who was then in perſon preſent at his own table? No, they ſung an hymn in concert, with their Lord at the head of them; which hymn was either one of Chriſt's compoſing on that ſpecial occaſion, or rather was a part of

[z] 1 Cor. xiv. 15. Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. [a] Matt. xxvi. 30.

of the Hallel [b], the Jews ſung at the paſſover, which began with the 113th, and ended with the 118th pſalm; the firſt part of which they ſung before they ſat down to eat, and the other after they had eaten, and after they had drunk the fourth and laſt cup; which laſt part ſeems to have been poſtponed the eating of the Lord's-ſupper, as containing in it ſeveral verſes ſuitable to that ordinance, eſpecially the cloſing part, which is this; "I will praiſe thee for "thou haſt heard me, and art become my ſalva-"tion. The ſtone which the builders refuſed, is "become the head-ſtone of the corner. This is the "Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This "is the day which the Lord hath made; we will "rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beſeech "thee, O Lord. O Lord, I beſeech thee, ſend "now proſperity. Bleſſed be he that cometh in the "name of the Lord. We have bleſſed you out of "the houſe of the Lord. God is the Lord which "hath ſhewed us light. Bind the ſacrifice with "cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou "art my God, and I will praiſe thee; thou art my "God, I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the "Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for "ever [c]." For my own part, it would be agreeable to me, if this was always ſung at the celebration of this ordinance. But to return to my argument. This hymn, or pſalm, was ſung by Chriſt and his apoſtles, as a church; which, though one of the leaſt of the churches, yet the pureſt that ever was on earth; where Chriſt ſung, according to his promiſe made long before, when he ſaid [d], "I will declare thy "name unto my brethren: In the midſt of the con-"gregation will I praiſe thee;" which the author of the epiſtle to the Hebrews, cites in this manner; "I

[b] Vid. *Buxtorf.* Lex. Talmud. in voce, הלל col. 613, *&c. Lightfoot*, Vol. 2. p. 354, 444, 1160. [c] Pſal. cxviii. 21, to the end. [d] Pſal. xxii. 22.

" I will declare thy name unto my brethren, and " in the midſt of the church will I ſing praiſe unto " thee, ὑμνήσω σε; will I ſing an hymn unto thee [e];" which he accordingly did ſing in the midſt of the congregation, the church, among his brethren, the apoſtles, at the inſtitution of the ſupper; and is an example we ought to follow at the adminiſtration of that ordinance.

The church at Corinth, in the times of the apoſtles, ſung pſalms: There were, indeed, ſome diſorders among them, in the performance of this, as well as other parts of public worſhip, which the apoſtle Paul endeavours to rectify in his epiſtle to them; " How is it then, brethren? ſays he, when ye come " together, every one of you hath a pſalm, hath a " doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath " an interpretation; let all things be done to edify- " ing [f];" where he does not blame them for thoſe things, provided care was taken to avoid confuſion, and that the edification of each other was regarded: And what he ſays in my text, with reſpect to himſelf and his own conduct in the diſcharge of both the duties of prayer and ſinging, is deſigned as an example and an inſtruction to this church.

The book of Revelation is a repreſentation of the ſtate and condition, ſervice and ſufferings of the churches of Chriſt on earth, in the ſeveral periods of time, until his ſecond coming; in which we have frequently an account of their being concerned in this work of ſinging [g], either the Lamb's new ſong, or the ſong of Moſes, or both; and which is repreſented as their employment, more or leſs, until the end of time. Now, ſince we have prophecy, precept, and precedent, for the practice of ſinging in New Teſtament-churches, none ſhould ſcruple the performance of it. But, before I diſmiſs this part of my

[e] Heb. ii. 12. [f] 1 Cor. xiv. 26. [g] Rev. v. 9, 10. and xiv. 1, 3. and xv. 3. and xix. 1—7.

my ſubject, it will be neceſſary to give an anſwer to the two following queries.

(1.) Whether women ſhould ſing in public, or in the churches? The reaſon of this query is, becauſe the apoſtle ſays[h], "Let your women keep ſilence in "the churches; for it is not permitted unto them "to ſpeak; but they are commanded to be under "obedience, as alſo ſaith the law. And if they "will learn any thing, let them aſk their huſbands "at home; for it is a ſhame for women to ſpeak in "the church." From whence it is inferred, that if women are to be ſilent, and not to ſpeak in the church, then they are not to ſing or ſpeak to themſelves and others, in pſalms, hymns, and ſpiritual ſongs. To which I anſwer, that it is evident the apoſtle is to be underſtood of ſuch kind of ſpeaking in public, as carries in it authority over the man, which ſinging does not; ſo he explains himſelf in another place, "Let the women learn in ſilence, in "all ſubjection. But I ſuffer not a woman to teach "nor to uſurp authority over the man, but to be in "ſilence[i]." It is certain, that all kind of ſpeaking in the church, is not forbidden to women; otherwiſe it would not be lawful for them to give an account of the work of God upon their ſouls, by word of mouth; nor could they be witneſſes for or againſt any member of the church chargeable with any iniquity. In theſe and ſuch like caſes, they have, no doubt, a right, and ſhould have the liberty of ſpeaking in the church: As for ſinging of pſalms, though, as an ancient[k] writer obſerves, "The apoſtle commands "women to be ſilent in the church; yet they are "capable of performing this ſervice well, which is "agreeable to every age, and fit for both ſexes." And indeed, if this is a part of moral worſhip, as I think,

[h] 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. [i] 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12. [k] Mulieres apoſtolus in eccleſia tacere jubet, pſalmum etiam bene clamant; hic omni dulcis aetati, hic utrique aptus eſt ſexui. *Ambroſ.* in Pſal. i.

think, I have sufficiently proved it is, it must be a duty belonging to them, and binding on them: Besides, it has been practised by them in all ages of the church. Miriam, and the Israelitish women, sung, as well as Moses and the children of Israel, at the Red-Sea; as did also Deborah with Barak; and not to take notice of the singing women in the temple-service, there is a prophecy of gospel-times, in which it is said [l], that a "great company of the blind and "lame, with the woman with child, and her that "travaileth with child, should come and sing in the "height of Zion;" and indeed, what else is the woman's propheſying [m], which the apostle does not object to, though he does to her doing it with her head uncovered, any other than her singing of psalms? as is well judged by a learned writer [n]; since prophecy is explained by the same apostle, by singing as well as by praying and preaching in another place [o].

(2.) It is a case of conscience with some, whether they should sing in a mixed multitude, or in the presence of unbelievers, they joining with them. The solution of which, I would attempt in the following manner; let it be observed, that singing, as a part of moral worship, is binding on all men, without exception, believers and unbelievers; the former, indeed, are the only persons who are capable of performing it in a spiritual and evangelic manner; but the latter may have a sense of God's goodness upon their minds, and be able to praise him for their temporal mercies, though they cannot do it in faith, nor without sin; nor indeed, can they perform a natural or civil action, any more than a moral one, without sin; for the "plowing of the wicked is "sin [p]:" But it does not from hence follow, that a man

[l] Jer. xxxi. 8—12. [m] 1 Cor. xi. 5. [n] *Lightfoot*, Vol. 2. p. 785, 1157. [o] 1 Cor. xiv. 15, 24, 26. [p] Prov. xxi. 4.

man must not plow, or perform any civil action, because he sins in it. And so likewise it ought not to be concluded, that a man should not pray, or sing psalms, or perform any other moral action, because he cannot do it in a spiritual way; for it is better for him to do it in the best way he can than not at all. But, supposing that it is not the duty of unbelievers to sing psalms, it will be very difficult to know who are such in public assemblies; and if such should join with you, why should this affect you that are believers? Will this sin of theirs be ever laid to your charge, or you be accountable for it? Should you neglect your duty because they are not in theirs? Must your mouths be stopped, because theirs are open? Should you not rather blush and take shame to yourselves? When you see them so forward to what you judge is not their duty, and you yourselves so backward to it. Besides, it has been the practice of the saints, in all ages, to sing in mixed assemblies. There was a mixed multitude which came up with the Israelites out of Egypt, in whose presence Moses and the children of Israel sung at the Red-Sea, and who, very probably, joined with them in the song, since they had a share in the common deliverance. The psalmist David, declared it as his resolution, and, no doubt but it was his practice, when he had opportunity, to sing the praises of God among the Heathens. "Therefore, says he, will I give thanks "unto thee, O Lord, among the Heathen, and sing "praises unto thy name. I will praise thee, O Lord, "among the people, I will sing unto thee among "the nations[q]." The church, in Solomon's song, is represented, not only as taking her part in the song in the midst of, but as joining with the daughters of Jerusalem, tho' they were ignorant of Christ her beloved. It is evident, that the church at Corinth

[q] Psal. xviii. 49. and lvii. 9.

rinth ſung pſalms in the preſence of unbelievers, as well as performed other parts of public worſhip; which was one reaſon that made the apoſtle ſo deſirous of rectifying the irregularities in this, as in the reſt; that ſo unbelievers, who came in among them, might be convinced and obliged to own, that God was in them of a truth. Moreover, inaſmuch as unbelievers are admitted to public prayers, and to join with you in them, why not to public ſinging? eſpecially, ſince ſome ends of this ordinance cannot be anſwered without their preſence; which are to "declare the Lord's doings among the people, and "make known his wonders and his glory among "the Heathen[r]:" To add no more, this ordinance has been an ordinance for converſion; I have known it to be ſo, and ſo have others beſides me; and a good reaſon this is why it ſhould be continued publickly in our churches, and unbelievers be admitted to an attendance on it.

V. I come now to conſider the manner in which this ordinance ſhould be performed, which I ſhall do very briefly, and ſhall chiefly regard what is expreſſed in my text, in which the apoſtle is deſirous that he might, and determines to, "ſing with the Spirit, "and with the underſtanding alſo."

1. "With the Spirit." By which may be meant, either the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, by which the apoſtle was capable of delivering out a pſalm or hymn extempore, and that in an unknown tongue; though he was determined to make uſe of this gift in ſuch a way, as to be underſtood by others, that ſo they might receive ſome profit and edification by it; or elſe, by the Spirit, may be deſigned the Spirit of God, who is abſolutely neceſſary to the ſpiritual performance of this duty. Believers, in the diſcharge of this work, ſtand in great need of him to

[r] Pſal. ix. 11, and xcvi. 3.

excite their attention, aſſiſt their meditations, enlighten their underſtandings, raiſe their affections, ſtrengthen their faith, and make a comfortable application of what is ſung to themſelves; or, by ſinging with the ſpirit, may be meant, ſinging with his own ſpirit; and indeed, believers ſhould be "fervent in ſpirit," whilſt they are ſerving the Lord in any ordinance: As God is a Spirit, he muſt be worſhipped in ſpirit, or with our ſpirits, that is, with our hearts engaged in the work we are concerned in; and then may we be ſaid to ſing with the ſpirit, when we ſing with grace in our hearts, or in the lively exerciſe of faith, and hope, and love; for to the due performance of this ordinance in a ſpiritual way, are required a large meaſure of grace, a good deal of ſpiritual light, knowledge, experience and judgment; for we ſhould ſing,

2. "With the underſtanding alſo;" *i. e.* either in a language that is to be underſtood, or with the underſtanding of what is ſung[s]; "ſing ye praiſes "with underſtanding;" or to the underſtanding of others; for one end of this duty is, to teach and admoniſh others as well as ourſelves; and, perhaps, the apoſtle may have ſome regard here to one of the titles of David's pſalms[t], *viz.* מַשְׂכִּיל, *maſchil*, which ſignifies a pſalm, giving inſtruction, or cauſing to underſtand. Unleſs we ſing in all theſe ſenſes with underſtanding, we ſing with little advantage, either to ourſelves or others. In a word, beſides our mutual edification, we ſhould have in our view the glory of God; we are to "ſing unto the Lord," not to ourſelves, or to raiſe our natural affections, or to gain applauſe from others, by the fineneſs of our voice, and exact conformity to the tune; but to the glory of Father, Son and Spirit, who are that one God

[s] Pſal. xlvii. 7. [t] So Pſal. xxxii. xlii. with many others.

God, who condeſcends to inhabit the praiſes of Iſrael.

Having now conſidered the ſeveral things I propoſed, relating to the ordinance of ſinging, I ſhall ſubjoin a ſhort account of the faith and practice of the ſaints in the three firſt centuries of Chriſtianity, with reſpect either to ſinging alone, or in the family, or in the churches; which added to the ſcriptural account of this duty, may ſerve the more to confirm us in the practice of it.

If the Therapeutae, a ſett of religious perſons mentioned by Philo the Jew, who was cotemporary with the apoſtles, were Chriſtians, as Euſebius [u] thinks, then we have a proof, beſides the ſcripture-ones, of the Chriſtians ſinging of pſalms and hymns in the times of the apoſtles; for of theſe Philo ſays, "That they not only gave themſelves up to a contemplative life, but compoſed ſongs and hymns "to God, in various kinds of metre and verſe; and "which they wrote as was neceſſary in graver "rhyme, and which they not only compoſed but "ſung [w];" though, perhaps, he may intend the Eſſenes, of whom Porphyry ſays [x], that "They "kept the ſeventh day of the week in hymns to "God, and in reſt." There are ſome, indeed, who think [y] they were neither, but a ſect of Jewiſh philoſophers: However this be, it is certain,

That there is now extant an epiſtle of Pliny to Trajan the emperor; in which he tells him, that one part

[u] Eccleſ. Hiſt l. 2. c. 17. p. 59.

[w] Ὡσὶ δ' θεωρῆσι μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ποιῆσιν ἄσματα καὶ ὕμνες εἰς Θεὸν διὰ παντοίων μέτρων καὶ μελῶν, ἃ ἐυθμοῖς σεμνολέροις ἀναγκαίως χαράττουσι. *Philo* de vita contemplativa, p. 893. Ed. *Pariſ.* Εἶλε ἄδουσι πεποιημένες εἰς τὸν Θεὸν ὕμνες πολλοῖς μέτροις καὶ μέλεσι. Ibid. p. 902.

[x] Τῇ ἑβδομάδι μὴ δεῖθαι κενώσεως, ἣν τηρεῖν ἐιώθασιν εἰς τὲς ὕμνες τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ εἰς ἀνάπαυσιν. *Porphyr.* de Abſtinent. l. 4. §. 13. p. 162.

[y] Vid. *Valeſ.* not. in *Euſeb.* p. 34, 35.

part of the charge against the Christians was, "That "they used to meet together at a stated time, be- "fore it was light, and sing a hymn among them- "selves, to Christ, as to a god [z]." Tertullian refers to this letter, and expresses the charge in it thus; "That they had their meetings before it was day, to "sing to Christ and to God [a]." Eusebius cites the same, and observes, that "Pliny declared that he "found nothing impious in them, nothing done "by them contrary to the laws, except that rising "early together, they sung an hymn to Christ af- "ter the manner of a god [b]." Now this letter was written in the latter end of the first century, or at the beginning of the second, and, as some think, whilst the apostle John was yet living.

Justin Martyr, *Anno* 150. in his epistle to Zena and Serenus, if it will be allowed to be genuine, speaks of the singing of psalms, hymns, and songs; and directs to the use of psalmody, in such a manner, as not to grieve our neighbours [c].

Athenogenes, a martyr, in the second century, as he was going to the fire, delivered an hymn to those that stood by, in which he celebrated the Deity of the blessed Spirit [d].

Clemens Alexandrinus, *Anno* 190, or 200. speaking of a good man, says, "His whole life is a con- "tinual

[z] Affirmabant autem, hanc fuisse summam vel culpae suae vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die, ante lucem convenire: Carmenque Christo quasi Deo, dicere secum invicem. *Plin.* Ep. l. 10. Ep. 97. p. 278. Ed. *Londin.* 1722.

[a] Nihil aliud se de sacramentis comperisse, quam coetus antelucanos ad canendum Christo & Deo. *Tertull.* Apolog. c. 2. p. 3.

[b] Μηδὲν ἀνόσιον, μηδὲ παρὰ τοὺς νόμους πράττειν αὐτοὺς καλαλειφέναι, εἰ μὴ τὸ γε ἅμα τῇ ἕω διεγειρομένους, τὸν χριστὸν θεῷ δίκην ὑμνεῖν. *Euseb.* Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 33 p. 105.

[c] Ὕμνος τε καὶ ψαλμὸς καὶ ᾠδὰς καὶ αἶνον ἁρμόζει, μὴ διὰ ψαλμῳδίας τὸν πλησίον λυπεῖν. *Justin.* ad *Zenam*, p. 509. Ed. *Paris.*

[d] Vid. *Fabricii* Biblioth. *Graec.* Vol. 5. c. 1. §. 24. p. 195.

" tinual holy day; his sacrifices are prayer and praise;
" the scriptures are read before eating of food; and,
" whilst eating, psalms and hymns are sung; and,
" at night, before he goes to bed, prayer is per-
" formed again [e]." And, in another place, he observes, that " a man's love, friendship, and good-will to God, should be shewn by thanksgiving and singing of psalms [f]; and he himself composed an hymn to Christ, which is still extant at the end of his Paedagogue.

Tertullian, who lived about the same time, has many things in his writings, which shew that singing of psalms, both publickly and privately, was practised in his day; in one place [g], he says " After washing of hands, and lighting up of candles,
" meaning at their Christian meetings, and love-
" feasts, every one might come forth, and sing to
" God, either out of the holy scriptures, or what
" was of their own composing." And, elsewhere [h], among the arguments he makes use of to prevail on Christians to marry among themselves, this is one; " Psalms and hymns, says he, are harmoniously
" sung between the happy pair; and they provoke
" each other to sing the better to their God." And in another place [i], he speaks " of the reading of the
" scrip-

[e] Ἅπας δὲ ὁ βίος αὐτῷ πανήγυρις ἁγία· αὐλίκα θυσίαι μὲν αὐτῷ, εὐχαὶ τε καὶ αἶνοι, καὶ αἱ πρὸ τῆς ἑστιάσεως ἐπιλύξεις τῶν γραφῶν· ψαλμοὶ δὲ καὶ ὕμνοι παρὰ τὴν ἑστίασιν. Πρό τε τῆς κοίτης, ἄλλαι, καὶ νύκτωρ, εὐχαὶ πάλιν. *Clement. Alex.* Stromat. l. 7. p. 728. Ed. *Paris.*

[f] Πρόσφορα μὲν ἡ εἰς Θεὸν δι' εὐχαριστίας καὶ ψαλμῳδίας γενέσθω φιλοφροσύνη. Id. Paedagog. l. 2. c. 4. p. 165.

[g] Post aquam manualem & lumina, ut quisque de scripturis sanctis, vel de proprio ingenio potest, provocatur in medium Deo canere. *Tertull.* Apolog. c. 39. p. 36.

[h] Sonant inter duos psalmi & hymni, & mutuo provocant, quis melius Deo suo cantet. Ib. ad uxorem, l. 2. c. 8. p. 191.

[i] Jam vero prout scripturae leguntur, aut psalmi canuntur, aut adlocutiones proferuntur, aut petitiones delegantur, ita inde materiæ visionibus subministrantur. Ib. de anima, c. 9. p. 311.

" scriptures, singing of psalms, preaching sermons, " and of prayer", as the several parts of publick worship. And to add no more, in another book[k] he makes this to be one part of the happiness of a chaste and continent man, that, " If he prays to " the Lord, he is near to heaven; if he studies the " scriptures, he is wholly there; if he sings a psalm, " he pleases himself."

Origen, *Anno* 226, or 230. speaking of the need of the Spirit of God in prayer, adds, " Even as no " man can sing a psalm or hymn to the Father in " Christ, in good rhyme, proper verse and metre, " and in concert, except the Spirit, who searcheth " all things, even the deep things of God, first " searches, and, as much as can be, comprehends " the deep things of the mind, with songs of praise " and hymns[l]."

Cyprian, *Anno* 246. exhorted Donatus to the practice of singing of psalms, in an epistle to him; " Let a psalm, says he, be sung at a feast, kept " with moderation; and that thou mayest have a " retentive memory, let thy voice be melodious. " Begin this work after the usual manner[m]."

Nepos, an Egyptian bishop, *Anno* 260. is greatly commended by Eusebius, not only for his faithfulness, labour, and diligence in the scriptures, but for his psalmody; which was very grateful to many of the brethren at that present time[n].

I

[k] Si orationem facit ad dominum, prope est Coelo. Scripturis incumbit, totus illic est. Si psalmum canit, placet sibi. Ib. de Exhort. Castitat. c. 10. p. 670.

[l] Ὥσπερ οὐδὲ ψάλλει καὶ εὐρύθμως καὶ ἐμμελῶς καὶ ἐμμέτρως καὶ συμφώνως ὑμνῆσαι τὸν Πατέρα ἐν Χριστῷ, ἐὰν μὴ τὸ Πνεῦμα πάντα ἐρευνῶν, καὶ τὰ βάθη τοῦ Θεοῦ, πρότερον ἀνίσει καὶ ὑμνήσει τῷ νῷ τὰ βάθη ἐρέυνησε, καὶ ὡς ἐξίσχυσε καλείληφεν. *Origen.* Περὶ εὐχῆς. Ed. *Oxon.* 1686.

[m] Sonet psalmos (vel psalmus) convivium sobrium: Et ut tibi tenax memoria est, vox canora; aggredere hoc munus ex more. *Cyprian.* ad *Donat.* p. 10. Ed. *Oxon.* 1682.

[n] Ἐν ἄλλοις μὲν πολλοῖς ἀποδέχομαι καὶ ἀγαπῶ Νέπωτα, τῆς τε πίστεως καὶ τῆς φιλοπονίας καὶ τῆς ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς διαρρίβης, καὶ τῆς πολ-

λῆς

I might go on to produce teſtimonies, proving pſalmody to be in uſe in the churches in the times of Conſtantine, not far from the third century, which, as Euſebius, who was on the ſpot, relates [o], was performed with a very decent and agreeable modulation of the voice. As alſo, in the churches at Alexandria and Milan [r], when Athanaſius was biſhop of theone, and Ambroſe of the other, who both lived in the fourth century. I might alſo obſerve, what ſpiritual delight and comfort the great Auſtin [q] found in attending on this ordinance; but I chuſe to go no further than the three firſt centuries, which were the pureſt and moſt incorrupt ages of Chriſtianity.

Paulus Samoſatenus, who denied the divinity of Chriſt, is the only perſon I have met with in this period of time, that objected to the pſalms and ſongs ſung in the churches, which he condemned as novel compoſitions [r]; and yet provided women to ſing in the church concerning himſelf: His reaſon for it ſeems to be, becauſe the divinity of Chriſt was in an excellent manner ſet forth in the old ſongs and pſalms; as appears from a paſſage in Euſebius, mentioned to confront Artemon and Theodotus, who had repreſented Chriſt's divinity as a novel doctrine. "The pſalms and ſongs of the "brethren, ſays Euſebius [s], which were written by "the faithful, from the beginning, ſet forth the "praiſes

λῆς ψαλμῳδίας, ἣ μέχρι νῦν πολλοὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἐυθυμεῖνται. *Euſeb.* Eccl. Hiſt. l. 7. c. 24. p. 271.

[o] Ib. l. 2. c. 17. p. 57. and l. 10. c. 3. p. 371.

[p] *Auguſt.* Confeſſ. l. 9. c. 6. §. 2. and 7. 1. and l. 10. c. 33. §. 2.

[q] Ib. l. 9. c. 6. §. 2. and l. 10. c. 33. §. 3.

[r] *Euſeb.* Eccl. Hiſt. l. 7. c. 30. p. 281.

[s] Ψαλμοὶ δὲ ὅσοι καὶ ᾠδαὶ ἀδελφῶν ἀπαρχῆς (ſcribendum eſt ἀπ' ἀρχῆς) ὑπὸ πιστῶν γραφεῖσαι, τὸν λογον τῦ Θεῦ τὸν Χριστὸν ὑμνεῦσι, θεολογεῖνες. Ib. l. 5. c. 28. p. 196.

" praiſes of Chriſt as the Word of God, aſcrib
" divinity to him." From the whole it may
concluded, that this ordinance of ſinging of pſal
as it was uſed by Chriſt and his apoſtles, ſo it
continued in the ages next to them; and thou
it has been dragged through the ſinks of pope
yet it ought not to be rejected on that accou
Had our reformers treated the ordinances of Ch
in ſuch a manner, becauſe they found them c
rupted, we ſhould have had no ordinance now
being: Let us rather do all we can to clear this
every degree of ſuperſtition, and reſtore it to
native ſimplicity and ſpirituality.

F I N I S.

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